

Blue Mountains Steiner School

Annual Report 2019



Blue Mountains Steiner School endeavours to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment that inspires a love of life-long learning

Blue Mountains Steiner School is an established, independent, non-denominational school founded in 1983 and situated on six acres of beautiful bush-land in Hazelbrook, in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Our particular ethos is based on the teachings of Dr Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian scientist and philosopher, who lived between 1861 and 1925. Blue Mountains Steiner School is an SEA (Steiner Education Australia) member school. This means that although we are an independent school, we are affiliated with other Rudolf Steiner / Waldorf Schools throughout Australia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The land on which our school is built has a history stretching back to the beginning of the Dreaming. I would like to acknowledge that our school is on the lands of the Dharug People and pay my respects to elders both past, present and future. I acknowledge the contributions of Aboriginal Australians and non-Aboriginal Australians to the education of all people on this land and in this part of country.

Martin Buckmaster
Principal

Blue Mountains Steiner School
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

BMSS EDUCATIONAL AND FINANCIAL REPORTING POLICY PURPOSE PROCEDURES

1. MESSAGES FROM KEY SCHOOL BODIES

The School Council
Principal's Report
Preschool

2. CONTEXTURAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

School Facts 2019
Our Vision
Our Mission
Our Values
Our Aims

3. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

4. SENIOR SECONDARY OUTCOMES N/A

5. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHER STANDARDS

6. WORKFORCE COMPOSITION, INCLUDING INDIGENOUS

7. STUDENT ATTENDANCE

8. POST SCHOOL DESTINATIONS N/A

9. ENROLMENT POLICIES AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENT BODY

10.SCHOOL POLICIES

11. SCHOOL DETERMINED IMPROVEMENT TARGETS

12. INITIATIVES PROMOTING RESPECT AND RESPONSIBILITY

13.PARENT, STUDENT AND TEACHER SATISFACTION

14.SUMMARY FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Blue Mountains Steiner School Educational and Financial Reporting Policy

Purpose

Blue Mountains Steiner School has procedures in place to maintain the relevant data and will comply with reporting requirements of the NSW Minister for Education and the Australian Government Department of Education. This reporting includes participation in annual reporting to publicly disclose the educational and financial performance measures and policies of the school and requirements related to the provision of data to the Minister that is relevant to the Minister's annual report to Parliament on the effectiveness of schooling in the State or data that may be requested by the Minister from time to time.

Procedures

Each year the School publicly discloses its educational and financial reporting measures and policies, as identified by the Minister, in an online or appropriate electronic form and provided to NESA no later than 1st July in the year following the reporting year.

Procedures for implementing the policy include:

- The School will identify the staff member(s) responsible for co-ordinating the final preparation and distribution of the annual report to NESA and other stakeholders as required.
- For each reporting area, the co-ordinator will identify the staff member(s) responsible for the collection, analysis and storage of the relevant data and for providing the relevant information to the coordinator for inclusion in the report.
- The co-ordinator will determine the specific content to be included in each section of the report and will review this each year to ensure ongoing compliance, relevance and usefulness
- The co-ordinator will oversee the preparation of the report in an online or appropriate electronic form to provide to NESA through *RANGS Online*.
- The co-ordinator will set the annual schedule for:
 - delivery of information for each reporting area to the person(s) coordinating the report
 - preparation and publication of the report
 - providing annual report requirements in electronic form to NESA on *RANGS Online* by 30 June 2020
- public disclosure of the annual report within 6 months after the end of a year by making it available on the internet (e.g. the school website) and on request in a form accessible by a person who is responsible for a student who is unable to access the internet.

Procedures for requests for additional data

From time to time the Australian Government, through the Minister for Education, and the NSW Government, through the Minister for Education, may request additional information. To ensure that such requests are dealt with appropriately, the School will identify the staff member(s)/person(s) responsible for the collection of the relevant data/information, coordinating the school's response and for ensuring provision of data/information requested by Minister(s) through the specified authority in an online or appropriate electronic format by the due date.

2019 Reporting Area 1

A message from key school bodies

Principal's Report 2019

In 2019 we celebrated 100 years of Waldorf (Steiner) Education worldwide. Today there are over 1,100 Waldorf schools and some 2,000 Waldorf Kindergartens in 80 countries around the globe. We are making our centennial an occasion to further develop Waldorf Education for contemporary times and focus on global dimensions.

We continued to use the Stage model from Classes 1-6 and keep the same structure across the school, due to specific positive feedback and results pertaining to this model. We also enjoyed some changes to the staff team, which brought fresh ideas and energy helping us to strengthen our team for future succession planning.

Compliance remains a significant factor in the running of a school in order to meet the current and forthcoming statutory requirements. BMSS received 5 year accreditation with NESA in 2019.

As a staff body we have been reviewing our curriculum with a focus on student engagement and differentiation, assessment and reporting procedures, a consistent numeracy and literacy curriculum across the school, science and technology and how to meet the NESA digital curriculum, student leadership, strengthening our Restorative Practice work as well as our Peer Support and Leadership program. Last year we ran 3 Sporting Schools programs and due to our weekly and daily PDHPE program as well as our camps and excursions we go above and beyond the expected PDHPE hours within our school.

We have also started our work with Aunty Jacinta Tobin to adopt our school totems. As part of this work we held a Waratah Totem dance Festival for our Spring Festival. We invite local Aboriginal elders to partake in our school festivals and have invited 4 local elders to be involved in the planning and running of an Early Childhood Nature conference in September, 2019. We have many ideas on growing our work with local Aboriginal elders and hope that this work continues.

We farewelled our Teaching Principal, Lisa O'Donnell, at the end of 2019. We wish her well in her new role as principal at another Steiner school.

We also thank all preschool and primary school teaching and support staff for the fabulous work in which they do within our school.

School enrolments have remained steady, with the plan for 15% growth in 2021. Council have now taken on a new marketing directive through Redcloud in order to meet this growth and continue to grow over the next 3 years.

Our preschool remains full-time with growing enrolments. The main council directives for preschool is to be a feeder into the primary school as well as to be keeping the pillars of Steiner education alive for the young child. The preschool operated financially independent in 2019.

Playgroup continued in 2019 and went from 2 to 3 days with Susanne Evans taking on a permanent part- time position.

In 2019 we welcomed Lindsey Pacchini to School Council.

At BMSS, we are a small school with a strong and supportive staff who try their hardest every day. It is an extremely special place to work and I thank you all for being such an integral part of our school.

Thank you to your children whom bring great joy and relevance to our work, every day. Thank you to our parent and carer community for entrusting your children into our care and working together with us closely in order to reach the highest forms of development for your child.

“If we do not believe within ourselves this deeply rooted feeling that there is something higher than ourselves, we shall never find the strength to involve into something higher.”
Rudolf Steiner

Thank you.
Martin Buckmaster

Council Report 2019

Council Members 2019

Kirstie Wulf (Chair)	Non-teacher – parent
Sean Howells (Treasurer)	Non-teacher - parent
Carmen Watts (Secretary)	Non-teacher – parent
Lisa O'Donnell	Principal/Teacher
Martin Buckmaster	Teacher/Chaplain/Operations Assistant
Francie O'Dea	Teacher
Lindsey Pacchini	Parent

In 2019 we welcomed Lindsey Pacchini to the School Council and I thank her and the continuing Council members for their contribution throughout the year.

Council met formally 11 times between March 2019 and March 2020. Council discussed, considered and made decisions on many issues relating to the management and governance of the school.

School, Kindergarten and Preschool Employees 2019

School Staff for the period were:

Martin Buckmaster
Meredith Cadd
Stephanie Cassin
Susanne Evans
Julie Humphreys
Freya Baska
Sandra Killelea
Prem Love
Wayne Murphy
Leanne Newton
Francine O'Dea
Lisa O'Donnell (Principal)
Karen Perry (Office Administration)
Sayoko Yanai

Preschool School Staff for the period were:

Catherine Cox
Jessica Dawson
Donna Hume

Juliet Macken
Jasmine Marshall
Kimberley Perry
Stephanie Smith

At the end of the 2019 school year part time Year 5/6 teacher Ian Jones, Japanese teacher Sayoko Yanai and Pre School Director Jessica Dawson left the school and I wish them the best of luck for the future.

Council would also like to thank Susanne Evans for leading parent choir and playgroup.

Financial 2019

The school made a loss of \$177,293 for the 2019 calendar year. This loss is primarily attributed to reduced grant income and losses from pre school. In 2019 Council will continue to work towards reducing the overdraft and recovering from the loss in 2019.

Treasurer's Report 2019

The following Treasurer's report has been based on information from the 2019 Audited Financial Statements, the Auditor's report for 2019 and workings from the finance committee.

The school operated at a profit of \$32,641 for the 2019 Calendar year, compared with \$155,848 loss for 2019. After adjusted for non-cash items (Depreciation, provision for doubtful debts, Long Service leave etc) a profit of \$77,371 resulted. The budget for 2019 had anticipated a profit of \$172,422. The decrease in the profit of \$95,051 is mainly due to the following:

- Grant income increased by \$70,014 from the budget.
- Decrease in fee revenue of \$6,729 from budget, however after adjusting for fee relief this is \$13,271 better than anticipated.
- Increases in the staffing costs of \$122,898 on the budget for the primary.
- Superannuation was over budget by \$6,245 for the primary school
- Insurance was up on budget \$8,231.
- Preschool was budgeted to provide the primary school a profit of \$62,000 in rental payments and have a \$20,000 profit in its own right. A Combined return of \$82,000. In reality it provided the school \$12,000 and made a profit of \$54,000, a combined return of \$66,000. This is a significant improvement of 2019.
- Legal costs not budgeted for was \$11,461. This was Complispace and employment advice.

Anticipated Profit	\$172,422
Less:	
Preschool profit variance	\$16,000
Insurance over budget	\$8,231
Increases in wages	\$122,898
Increases in super	\$6,245
Unanticipated legal fees	\$11,461
Increases in costs	\$13,501
Add:	
Increases in Grant income	\$70,014
Increase in fee revenue	\$13,271
Actual Profit	\$77,371

In comparison to the previous financial year;

Fee income was up \$19,554 (4.7%)

Grant income was up \$118,462 (16.2%)

Preschool income was up \$91,988 (26.1%)

Primary salaries was down \$4,748 (0.53%)

Preschool salaries were up \$2,396 (0.72%)

Cash assets increased by \$25,945 to \$35,775.

Reductions in long term debt saw them reduced from \$665,775 to \$584,126.

Other items of interest for the school are as follows;

- Fees outstanding at the yearend are \$102,391.91 This represents an increase of \$15,756.24.

The coming year will present challenges, as always, within the school. A budgeted profit of \$202,130. This has been achieved by a significant change in the teaching structure of the school.

This profit relies on \$36,000 being paid from the preschool to the primary which it has been making monthly \$3,000 payments for.

Sean Howells
Treasurer

BLUE MOUNTAINS STEINER SCHOOL

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2018 – 2020

Meeting our Future



& Inspiring a Love of Learning



Blue Mountains Steiner School

83 Clearview Parade , Hazelbrook NSW 2779
Phone: (02) 4758 6044 Fax: (02) 4758 9109

PO BOX 149, Hazelbrook NSW 2779

Our School Values

As a Steiner school we encourage:

- The nurturing and preservation of childhood
 - Imaginative education
 - Independent thinking
 - Educational principles that support long-term health and wellbeing
- Self-expression and embracing differences
 - AS Intrinsic motivation for life-long learning
 - Social and environmental awareness
 - Commitment to high standards of work





Blue Mountains Steiner School endeavours to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment that inspires a love of life-long learning

Blue Mountains Steiner School is an established, independent, non-denominational school founded in 1983 and situated on six acres of beautiful bush-land in Hazelbrook, in the Blue Mountains, west of Sydney. Our particular ethos is based on the teachings of Dr Rudolf Steiner, an Austrian scientist and philosopher, who lived between 1861 and 1925. Blue Mountains Steiner School is an SEA (Steiner Education Australia) member school. This means that although we are an independent school, we are affiliated with other Rudolf Steiner / Waldorf Schools throughout Australia.

Blue Mountains Steiner School

Self – Assessment



Step 1 - Gather Evidence



Step 2 - Analyse Evidence



Step 3 - Make Judgements



Step 4 - School Self-evaluation



Step 5 - School Improvement Plan



Step 6 - Monitor & Implement

Blue Mountains Steiner School endeavours to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment that inspires a love of life-long learning.



'Inspiring a Love of Learning', the Blue Mountains Steiner School caters for early childhood and primary school education. The School provides Kindergarten to Year 6, including a transition to school programme, with a Steiner curriculum that aims to both meet and exceed NESA syllabus requirements. Wattle Glow Early Learning, for children from age 2 years is registered with New South Wales Early Childhood Education and Care Directorate, Department of Education and Communities and Little Sprouts Steiner Playgroup.

We are an established (1983), independent, co-educational, non-denominational, SEA (Steiner Education Australia) and AIS NSW registered school in a beautiful bushland setting. We are inclusive of culture, race and spiritual or religious beliefs. Steiner inspired education is a fine art concerned with the unfolding of each unique human being. We endeavour to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment and view all areas

of a child's development as integral to a healthy and balanced life: academic, creative and spiritual, physical, technical and cultural, social and moral.

As a Steiner school we encourage:

- ◆ The nurturing and preservation of childhood
- ◆ Imaginative education
- ◆ Independent thinking
- ◆ Educational principles that support long-term health and wellbeing
- ◆ Self-expression and embracing differences
- ◆ Intrinsic motivation for life-long learning
- ◆ Social and environmental awareness
- ◆ Commitment to high standards of work
- ◆ Self-reliance, self-respect and respect for others

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we provide an education for life by meeting each stage of a child's development with sequential, integrated programs that offer challenges and stimulation through richness of content. We strive to inspire students toward strong academic growth through social and emotional education using hands-on technique.

Please refer to the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au> for further information.

Lisa O'Donnell, Principal

On behalf of The Blue Mountains Steiner School Council

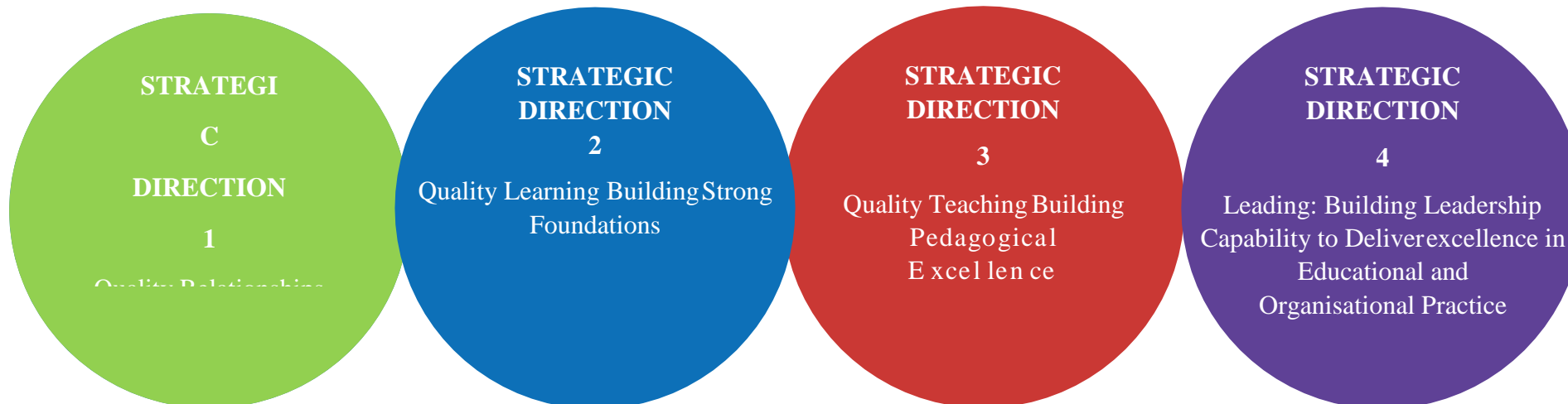


Table of Acronyms used in the School Improvement Plan

Acronym	Description
AIS	Association of Independent Schools
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
NESA	NSW Educational Standards Authority
CT	College of Teachers
EDUMATE	School Administration Software Program
P	Principal
ETM	Effective Teacher Model
OE	Outdoor Education
ILP	Individual Learning Plan
L&N	Literacy and Numeracy
BMSS	Blue Mountains Steiner School
RAP	Reconciliation Action Plan
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program-Literacy and Numeracy
SC	School Council
PD	Professional Development
APS	Australian Professional Teaching Standards
PA	Parents Association
SCSEEC	Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood
SIP	School Improvement Plan
TAA	Teacher Accreditation Authority
WH&S	Work Health and Safety
WHSO	Workplace Health and Safety Officer



School Strategic Directions



Purpose:

To provide a holistic approach to supporting and developing quality relationships and partnerships.

Our belief is that providing inspirational, positive, respectful and caring relationships, will contribute to a learning community which will support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students.

Purpose:

To provide a whole school approach to the delivery of quality learning experiences that are focused and differentiated thereby enabling students to develop strong identities as self directed learners.

Quality learning experiences, along with positive, respectful and caring relationships, will contribute to an aspirational learning culture which will support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual wellbeing of all students.

Purpose:

Passionate and skilled teachers inspiring a love of lifelong learning. Our purpose is to create and maintain a stimulating and engaging professional environment for educators, supported by a positive collaborative culture that develops skilled and high performing teachers. Within this, we are particularly focused on the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills across all learning areas.

Purpose:

The school improvement plan is at the centre of continuous improvement efforts, with school's vision and strategic direction evident in its main business.

Strategic Direction : Quality Relationships and Partnerships

Purpose	People	Processes	Practices and Products
<p>The school recognises the holistic nature of the development of children .</p>	<p>Students</p> <p>Experience a balanced curriculum that instills confidence in self and a sense of social and environmental responsibilities.</p>	<p>Deliver quality student centred and self-regulated learning experiences which enables students to grow with confidence.</p>	<p>Practices</p> <p>ILP's specific to each child.</p> <p>Child studies run by college.</p> <p>Curative work run by college.</p>
	<p>Staff</p> <p>Instilling a love of learning of learning through a child- centered curriculum based on the developmental stages of childhood.</p> <p>School chaplain will implement an explicit social awareness teaching program that is specific to each developmental stage of the child.</p> <p>Staff will continue studying the works and indications of Rudolf Steiner.</p> <p>Relational teaching.</p> <p>Teaching through imaginative creative and responsive learning techniques.</p>	<p>Our curriculum improvement plan is built on understanding the needs of the whole child and identifies the areas, we seek to address to ensure happy, healthy students who are ready to step confidently into the world.</p>	<p>Restorative practice work through staff, students, parent</p> <p>Positive peer leadership opportunities across the stages.</p> <p>Peer support Australia run by Class 6.</p> <p>Seasonal whole school community festivals.</p> <p>Sequential outdoor classroom and OE program to grow social/emotional learnings.</p> <p>Bush kindy program with the intention of organising a National Bush Preschool Conference in 2019.</p> <p>Peer mentoring.</p>
	<p>Parents/Carers</p> <p>Weekly Steiner study group.</p> <p>Regular parent/teacher meetings with social and emotional focus.</p> <p>Working closely with the child, teachers and families to truly understand each child to help them reach their full potential.</p> <p>Regular opportunities for adult education.</p>	<p>Safe school plan implemented throughout the school.</p> <p>Kinaesthetic learning, integrated learning, living classroom.</p> <p>Positive education.</p> <p>Self esteem and confidence building in our bush program.</p> <p>Mindfulness training.</p>	<p>Products</p> <p>Confident children making seamless transitions to high school.</p> <p>Well supported festivals that are enjoyed by the whole community.</p>
	<p>Leaders</p> <p>Lead by example</p> <p>Celebrating childhood through all areas of the school.</p> <p>Leading the way with a strong social welfare program. Establish peer coaching</p>		<p>Community winter spiral put on for the Greater Blue Mountains.</p> <p>Collegial staff that enjoy</p> <p>Coming to work</p> <p>Staff that are able to mediate and navigate through conflict.</p>

Strategic Direction : Quality Relationships and Partnerships

Evaluation Plan

- Focus groups and internal surveys.
- Well-being Self –Assessment Tool.
- School survey to be analysed by school council (Term 1 & Term 4)
- Weekly staff meeting, feedback and minutes
- Teacher, parent & student surveys (Tm 3)/Internal surveys
- Evaluation of milestones
- Newsletters/facebook/website
- Evaluation of bush preschool and OE programs within the school
-

Expected Outcomes

- Student engagement in learning increases.
- Maintaining and growing a healthy number of enrolments.
- Positive working relationships between staff, students and parents
- We have implemented a comprehensive pre-school to class 6 OE program which has actively engaged students in and enhanced self perception.
- Attract and maintain outstanding staff members

Strategic Direction 2: Quality Learning Building Strong Foundations

Purpose	People	Processes	Practices and Products
<p>To provide a whole school approach to the delivery of quality learning experiences that are focused and differentiated thereby enabling students to develop strong identities as self directed learners.</p> <p>Quality learning experiences, along with positive, respectful and caring relationships, will contribute to a positive learning culture which will support the cognitive, emotional, social, physical and spiritual well-</p>	<p>Students</p> <p>Articulate how they learn and why they learn and develop their critical thinking, problem solving, collaborative and communication skills to achieve their learning goals.</p> <p>Staff</p> <p>Explicit teaching is the main practice used in the school, reflecting the current evidence base. Teachers routinely and explicitly review previous content and preview the learning planned with students in each class.</p> <p>Differentiate their teaching to meet students' learning needs by providing targeted intervention in areas of literacy and numeracy.</p> <p>Enable students to set, achieve and reflect on learning goals targeted to their needs.</p> <p>Keep learning goals with student and teacher and support students in achieving those goals and respond.</p> <p>Parents/Carers</p> <p>Work collaboratively with the school staff to support student achievement in learning, engagement and wellbeing</p> <p>Leaders</p> <p>Establish structures and processes to identify, address and monitor student learning needs.</p>	<p>Curriculum and Learning</p> <p>Deliver quality student centred and self-regulated learning experiences which enables students to understand how they learn and to set and achieve their learning goals.</p> <p>Personalised Learning</p> <p>Ensure learning is data driven and based on formative assessment practices and learning progressions. Timely, targeted intervention and feedback for all students reflects best practice. Students access tailored support, extension or enrichment setting high expectations for student achievement.</p> <p>Maximise the school integrated approach to student well-being in which students can connect, succeed and thrive at each stage of their schooling.</p> <p>Develop a user friendly evidence based assessment system for each</p>	<p>Practices</p> <p>Students and staff are involved in the continuous use of assessment data to monitor achievements and gaps in student learning and inform planning for quality and pertinent learning</p> <p>Relationships between all stakeholders</p> <p>Products</p> <p>Collaborative Practice</p> <p>Develop and implement collaborative processes for consistency in teacher judgement in the literacy and numeracy continua/ progressions as well as internal assessment.</p> <p>A student centred learning environment exists where all students are supported, challenged and they are receiving timely and meaningful feedback on their learning</p> <p>Positive and respectful relationships across the school community underpin a productive and positive learning</p>

Strategic Direction 2: Quality Learning Building Strong Foundations

Evaluation Plan

- All data will be analysed collaboratively:
- Stage 3 Goal Setting (Tm1 and 3).
- Focus groups and internal surveys.
- Well-being Self –Assessment Tool.
- Analyse DIBELS data.
- Ongoing review of NAPLAN and DIBELS
- Internal student assessment data
- Classroom Observation (student engagement).
- PBL data.

Improvement Measures

- Increase the proportion of students achieving proficiency in line with the Premier's Majority
- Improved levels of student wellbeing and engagement.
- Increased levels of engagement and feedback from student representatives.

Strategic Direction 3: Quality Teaching Building Capacity and Instructional Expertise

Purpose	People	Processes	Practices and Products
<p>Passionate and skilled teachers inspire life-long learning. Our purpose is to create and maintain a stimulating and engaging professional environment for educators, supported by a positive collaborative culture that develops skilled and high performing teachers. Within this, we are particularly focused on the teaching of Literacy and Numeracy skills across all learning areas.</p>	<p>Students</p> <p>Provide timely and respectful feedback to teachers on their learning experiences</p>	<p>Research Informed Pedagogy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw on solid research to develop and implement high quality professional learning in literacy and numeracy teaching practices. - Use SA spelling for all year levels - Use Mini-Lit in kindergarten - Use Macquarie Literacy Classes 1-6 	<p>Practices</p> <p>Continuous collaboration and action learning results in an explicit teaching approach to literacy and numeracy, which is research informed.</p>
	<p>Staff</p> <p>Maintain accurate records, documentation and assessment data in order to evaluate and adjust their teaching strategies, to maximise impact on student learning.</p> <p>Teachers respond promptly to student work. They check that students understand the feedback received and the expectations for how to improve.</p> <p>Work collaboratively to ensure that their pedagogy aligns with practices that are shown through research to have a high probability of success.</p> <p>Teachers use the APS to measure themselves, reflect on their practice and plan, and monitor their own professional development to improve their performance.</p>		<p>The use of data collection and collaborative evaluation in an embedded practice to inform decisions, interventions and initiatives in literacy and numeracy.</p>
	<p>Parents/Carers</p> <p>Engage in literacy and numeracy information activities around assessment and teaching strategies.</p> <p>Parent teacher information nights</p> <p>Parents provide timely and respectful feedback to teachers on their children's learning experiences</p>	<p>Collaborative Practice</p> <p>Develop and implement collaborative processes for consistency in teacher judgement in the literacy and numeracy progressions as well as internal assessment & external data.</p> <p>Maximise the school integrated approach to student well-being in which students can connect, succeed and thrive at each stage of their schooling.</p> <p>To build and grow our movement enriched curriculum to ensure better</p>	<p>Systems are embedded where teachers make informed and consistent judgements about student progress based on deep knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, literacy and numeracy progressions, as well as working Rudolf Steiner indications and the</p>
	<p>Leaders</p> <p>Establish and improve processes which build the capacity of the school community to support and engage in evidence-based practice and planning about school improvement, particularly relating to teaching and learning.</p> <p>The school provides/facilitates PL that builds teachers understanding of effective strategies in teaching literacy and</p>		<p>Products</p> <p>Structures are in place to enable regular meetings and opportunities to collaboratively plan, reflect, improve and deliver evidence informed pedagogy. As well as working with the development stages of the child and Rudolf Steiner</p> <p>Teachers use data & collaborative practice to tailor programs to meet student needs. This includes weekly assessment welfare/college meeting, DIBELS, sharing of student engagement and observations.</p>

Strategic Direction 3: Quality Teaching Building Capacity and Instructional Expertise

Evaluation Plan

- Strengthen evaluative culture and practice by establishing regular 'pause points' throughout the year and providing professional learning on the use of quality sources of data to inform future teaching and learning.
- Evaluation Plan
- All data will be analysed collaboratively:
- School survey to be analysed by school council (Term 1)
- Weekly staff meeting, feedback and minutes
- Teacher, parent & student surveys (Tm 3)/Internal surveys
- NAPLAN data (Tm 3)
- Meeting minutes
- Lesson plans/teaching programs (each term)
- Classroom observation data (each semester minimum)
- Teacher observations 7 reflections (pre & post)
- Student engagement - Data collection

Improvement Measures

- An improved learning culture that ensures all students thrive in year 7 after leaving BMSS
- Increased use of evidence-informed pedagogy by all the teachers. That is shared weekly at weekly staff meetings.
- All teachers maintaining current or accreditation standards working towards higher accreditation (HA or Lead).

Strategic Direction 4: Leading: Building Leadership Capability to Deliver excellence in Educational and Organisational Practice

Purpose	People	Processes	Actions
<p>The school plan is at the centre of continuous improvement efforts, with school's vision, values and strategic direction evident in its main business.</p>	Students <p>Students will participate in school evaluation processes and provide input into the school improvement (term 1 & 3)</p> <p>Students to take on leadership roles within the school (ie, student council, student organising fundraising events, student organised interactive</p>	<p>School Planning, Implementation and Reporting</p> <p>Sustain educational change through the use of evidence based strategy & innovative thinking in designing a school plan that remains a relevant learning centre.</p>	Practices <p>Financial planning is integrated with school planning & implementation processes.</p> <p>Resources are equitably distributed to support the strategic directions & improve student learning outcomes</p>
	Staff <p>Staff will collaborate in school planning processes, support the strategic directions and identify areas for student improvement.</p> <p>All staff to be encouraged to take on leadership roles within the school in areas of strength.</p>		<p>School's physical facilities are used flexibly to meet a range of student need and interests.</p> <p>We maintain a sustainable financial practice.</p>
	Parents/Carers <p>Parents will work collaboratively with the school to support school planning, programs and provide constructive feedback.</p> <p>Parent/teacher nights, parent teacher meetings, meeting with the Principal/ Chaplain, festival feedback channels and online surveys</p>	<p>School Resources</p> <p>Integrate longer term financial planning with school Strategic planning & implementation processes.</p> <p>Provide equitable support and distribution of learning opportunities.</p> <p>Succession planning across the school.</p>	Resources <p>The school uses collaborative feedback & reflection to promote & generate learning & innovation</p>
	Leaders <p>Establish structures and processes to support whole school community engagement in school improvement</p>		<p>Shared school wide responsibility & collaboration is evident through leadership, teaching, learning and community evaluations generating school improvement</p> <p>Excellent physical resources. Grounds and classrooms beautifully maintained.</p>

Strategic Direction 4: Leading: Building Leadership Capability to Deliver excellence in Educational and Organisational Practice

• Evaluation Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus groups & surveys• Tell Them from me• Schools' internal & external data• Budget /RAM/P&C funds• Evaluation of milestones• TD Plans• ASR• School Plan• Newsletters/facebook/website• Regular feedback/reflection processes from School Governance Team.• Regular feedback/reflection processes from School Management Team• Regular feedback/reflection processes from College of Teachers.•

Expected Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data reflects Improved levels of whole school & community collaboration & connectedness and vitality.• Resource allocation reflects strong support for Literacy, Numeracy and innovative programs• To sustain prudent financial management planning with continual growth and strengthen leadership as a school priority.• A school based on community values.• Objective analysis of current situation.• Regular discussions with key stakeholders.• Development of framework for the future to enable clear understanding and acceptance of roles and responsibilities in the school.• School leadership positions to hold integrity in future planning.• Healthy sustainable enrolments.• Succession planning in place.• The complete implantation of the School Improvement Plan.

Wattle Glow Steiner Preschool Directors Report for 2019

Wattle Glows hours continue run Monday-Friday 7.30am-5pm, spanning age groups from 2-5yrs. The age range was split into the Wattle Glow Room (2-4yrs) and Boronia Room (4-5yrs) (Tues, Wed, Thurs). The Boronia children work alongside the Kindergarten children and Francine (Kindy teacher).

Bush Play continues to run 2 days per week.

Attendance:

February 2019	Wattle	Boronia
Monday	4	4
Tuesday	12	8
Wednesday	12	9
Thursday	7	7
Friday	5	5

February Capacity Percentage: 50%
Families enrolled: 32

December 2019	Wattle	Boronia
Monday	11	5
Tuesday	22	11
Wednesday	19	9
Thursday	19	12
Friday	14	6

December Capacity Percentage: 80%
Families enrolled: 53

Staffing:

Permanent staff : Catherine Cox, Beth Adams (resigned March 2019), Donna Hume, Jasmine Marshall (Maternity leave April 2019-December 2019) and Kimberley Perry (resigned October 2019)

Casual staff –Juliet Macken, Diva Perez, Stephanie Smith, Juliana Umpierre, Hazel Van der Meijden, Nat Karnjhana

Staff Development:

Juliana Umpierre: Self- funded: Best practices for the Care of the Child from Birth to 3.

Catherine Cox: Self- funded: Gowrie Institute-Refresher of the National Quality Standards; Anaphylaxis and Asthma training.

All staff completed mandatory reporting/ child protection certification

All staff updated WWCC

2019 Nominated Supervisors:

Martin Buckmaster & Lisa O'Donnell

Adult Learning Group 2019

Our school strives to be, not only a place for our students to learn but a whole community of learners, that includes teachers, parents and other community members as well.

The Adult Learning Mission Statement:

Our aim is to create an information and events centre for the Blue Mountains Steiner School area, so that the cultural life of the Blue Mountains Steiner School (BMSS) can flourish and reflect transparently, the philosophy of the curriculum and Rudolf Steiner.

This in turn, can support and nourish adults on their paths of self-development and in particular, sets an example of parenting as a vocation in our present time.

Adult Learning provides a link between the School and the wider community, as the School places itself as a 'community learning centre'.

Lisa O'Donnell, our Principal as well as the College of Teachers run the Adult Learning within our school. At present there is no parent Adult Learning Initiative Coordinator for the School and this volunteer position is open.

In 2019, we held termly parent/ teacher interviews for all of the classes as well as a parent/ teacher night for each of the classes.

Lou Harvey-Zahra conducted workshops with both parents entitled "Thriving Children".

Other workshops and courses advertised in the News Sheet were:

- drawing & painting classes
- Learn Mindfulness in Nature
- Flamenco lessons
- Piano lessons
- Meditation for Mothers
- Talk: Becoming a calmer and happier mum by Wendy Gilroy
- Singing Lessons
- Tai Chi
- Goulburn yurt farm "new skills course"
- Spoon carving introduction
- Violin & flute lessons
- Building Blocks for Building Resilience within your child
- Alchemize Your Dreams
- Women Find Your Way Home
- New Beginnings Retreat
- Foundations of Early Childhood (distance)
- The Art of Caring – Working with children under the age of three
- Seasonal Arts Studio

We utilised social media to gain broader access to interested members of the school community and the broader community.

Articles shared on the school's Facebook page:

- The Seven Year Cycles of Child Development
- What is a Steiner School
- The Twelve Senses
- Outdoor Learning
- Teaching Early Literacy in Waldorf Education

- How Restorative Practices work for Students and Educators
- Promoting Curiosity – A Driving Force of Learning
- High Tech vs No Tech – D.C. areas schools take opposite approaches to education
- What is the Waldorf School Method?
- Let's stop stealing time from children
- Students need time in nature
- The Right Brain Develops First - Why Play is the Foundation for Academic Learning
- What's lost when we rush kids through childhood
- Why do Waldorf students learn how to knit?
- Why dance is just as important as maths in school
- What makes some people innovative?
- Seven benefits of Waldorf "Writing to Read"
- Inside the tech-free school where high-tech parents are sending their kids
- Summer unplugged: A parents' guide to helping kids go screen free
- Five biggest reasons Waldorf students excel at top universities
- Google finds STEM skills aren't the most important skills
- Five Simple Strategies for Promoting Creativity in Children Today
- The Digital Gap between rich kids and poor kids is not what we think
- Drawing is the fastest, most effective way to learn
- Learning Styles: "Why one size fits all" doesn't work

2019 Reporting Area 2

Contextual information about the school

Blue Mountains Steiner School endeavours to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment that inspires a love of life-long learning.

'Inspiring a Love of Learning', the Blue Mountains Steiner School caters for early childhood and primary school education. The School provides Kindergarten to Year 6, including a transition to school programme, with a Steiner curriculum that aims to both meet and exceed Board of Studies syllabus requirements. Wattle Glow Preschool, for children from age 3 years is registered with NSW Department of Education. Little Sprouts Steiner Playgroup is run independently on school campus. We are an established (1983), independent, co-educational, non-denominational, SEA (Steiner Education Australia) and AIS NSW registered school in a beautiful bushland setting. We are inclusive of culture, race and spiritual or religious beliefs.

Steiner inspired education is a fine art concerned with the unfolding of each unique human being. We endeavour to provide a balanced and purposeful educational environment and view all areas of a child's development as integral to a healthy and balanced life: academic, creative and spiritual, physical, technical and cultural, social and moral.

As a Steiner school we encourage:

- the nurturing and preservation of childhood
- independent thinking
- educational principles that support long-term health and wellbeing
- self-expression and embracing differences
- intrinsic motivation for life-long learning
- social and environmental awareness
- commitment to high standards of work
- self-reliance, self-respect and respect for others

We provide an education for life by meeting each stage of a child's development with sequential, integrated programs that offer challenges and stimulation through richness of content.

Please refer to the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au> for further information.

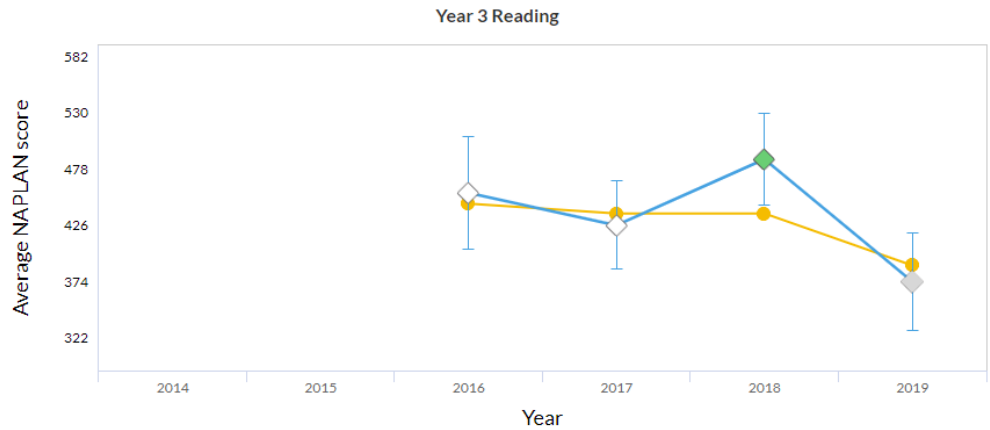
Martin Buckmaster, Principal

2019 Reporting Area 3
School performance in national and state-wide tests
and examinations

Naplan Results

Year 3

Reading



Select categories:

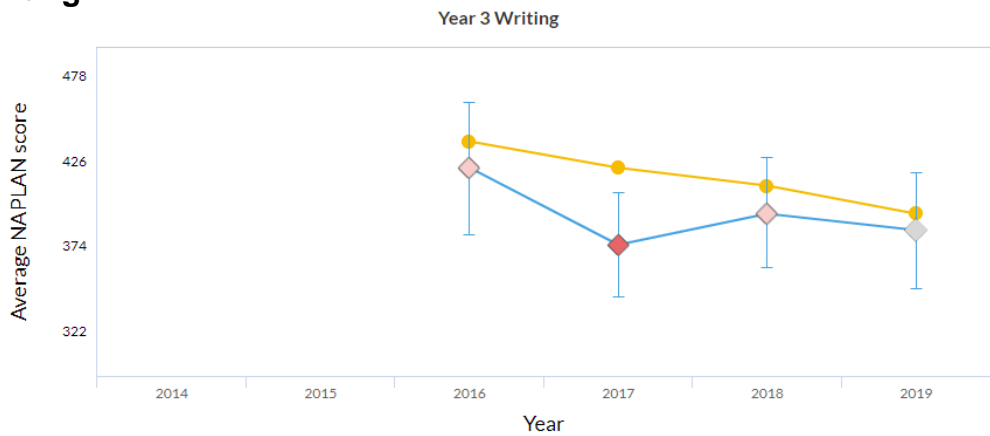
- ☒ Selected school ☒ Students with similar background ☐ All Australian students

Interpreting the graph

Selected school's average when compared to students with a similar background

- Well above
- Above
- Close to
- Below
- Well below
- No comparison available
- 90% level of confidence

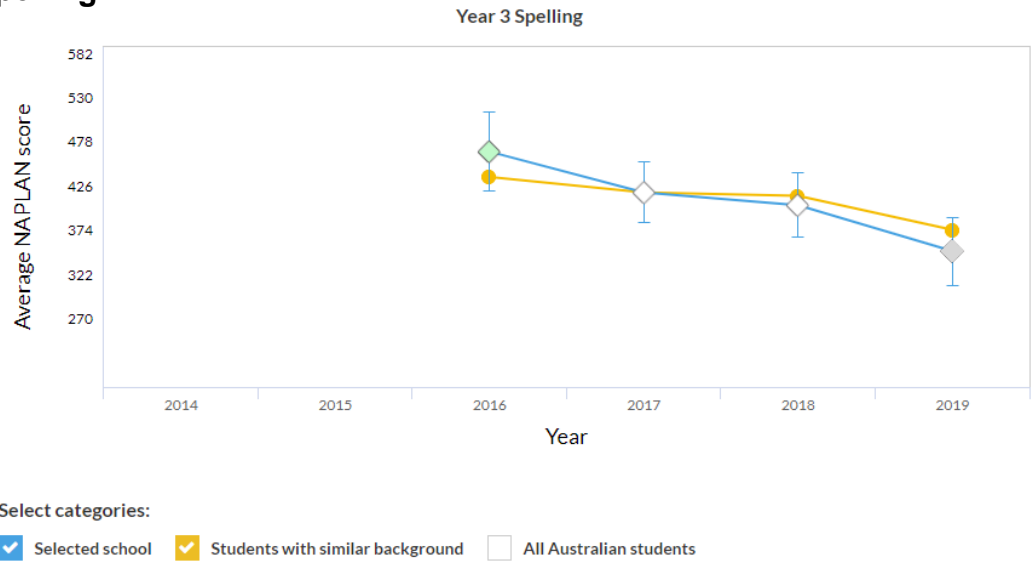
Writing



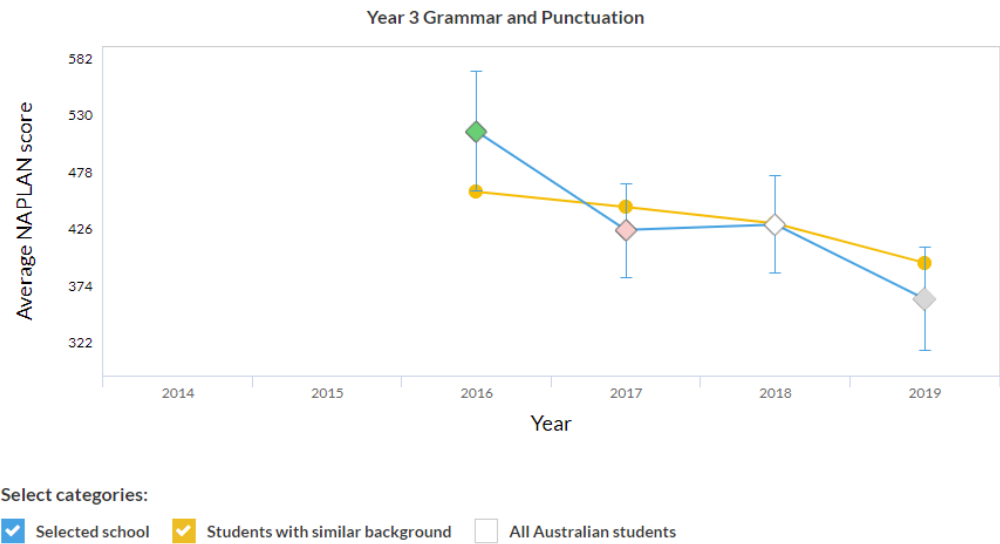
Select categories:

- ☒ Selected school ☒ Students with similar background ☐ All Australian students

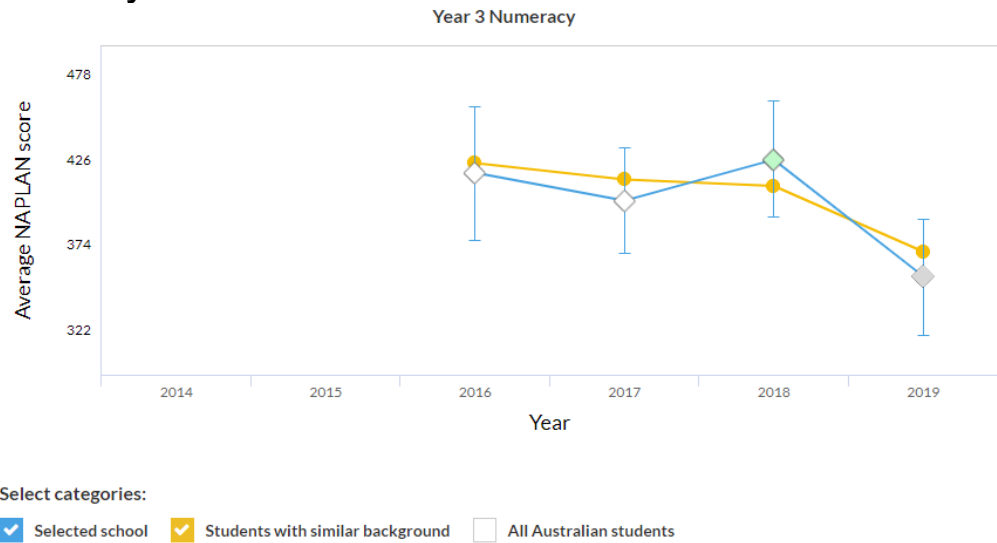
Spelling



Grammar and Punctuation

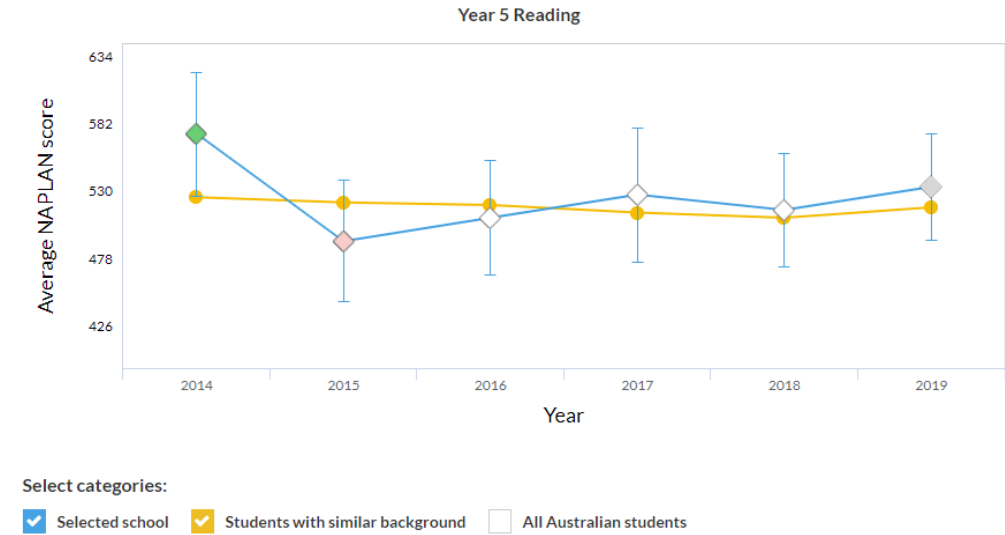


Numeracy



Year 5

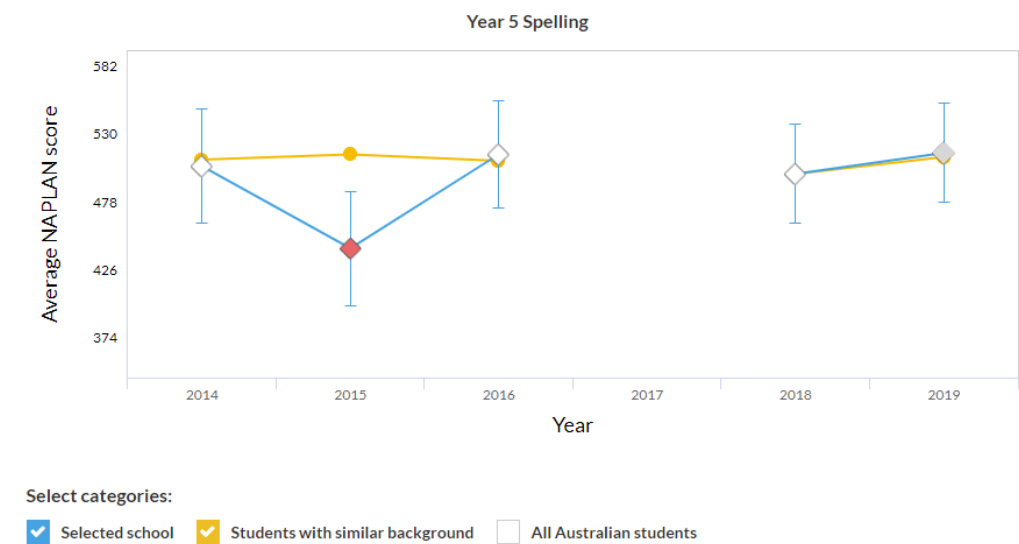
Reading



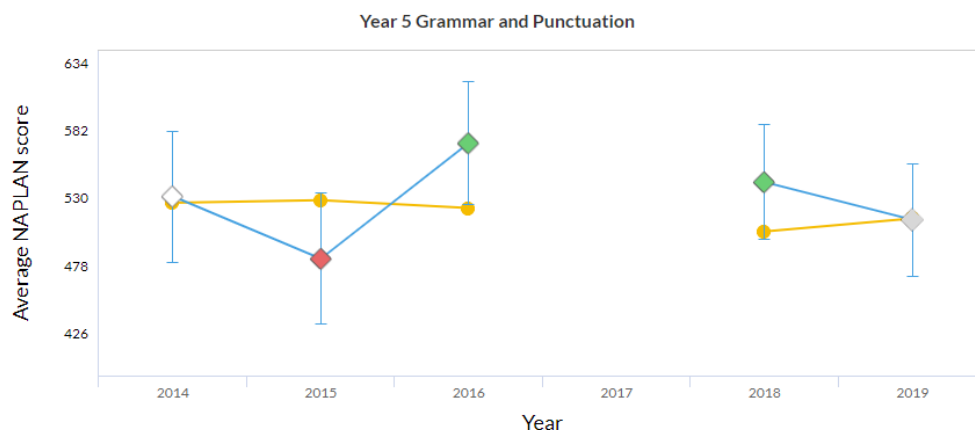
Writing



Spelling



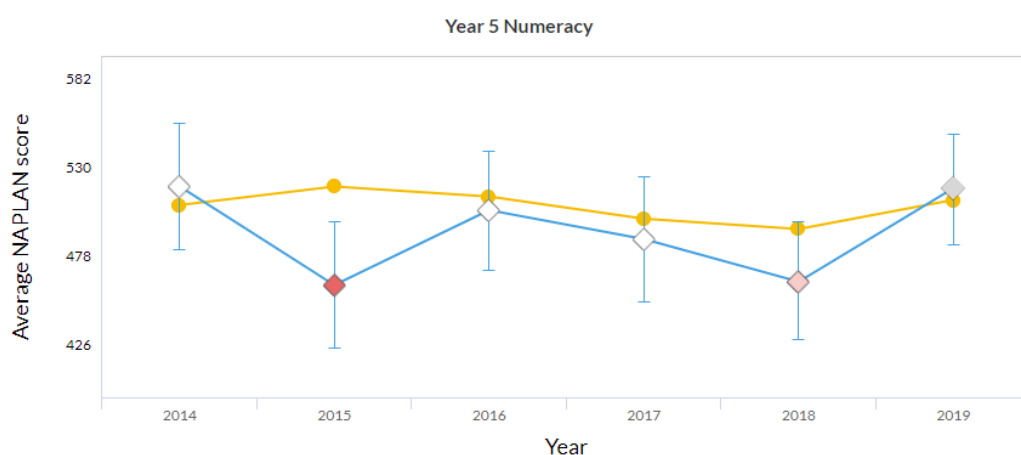
Grammar and Punctuation



Select categories:

☒ Selected school ☒ Students with similar background ☐ All Australian students

Numeracy



Select categories:

☒ Selected school ☒ Students with similar background ☐ All Australian students

For more information, please reference <http://www.myschool.edu.au>

2019 Reporting Area 4 Senior secondary outcomes

N/A

2019 Reporting Area 5 Professional learning and teacher standards

Professional Learning

In-service Professional Learning Activities were open to all school staff. During term time the school ran or facilitated special workshops/talks as well as PL at the start of pedagogical meetings. The weekly PL sessions varied from short briefings up to 45-minute sessions. Generally, all full-time teaching staff attended weekly learning. Board members, part-time teachers, support staff and other staff members both casual and part-time were also welcome. Board members, part-time and casual staff attendance varied between being regular, or in line with their FTE hours or compliance requirements (depending upon the staff members interest in PL & the topics offered).

Group Professional Learning Topics covered throughout 2019:		
Date	Activity	Attended by
17/01/19	Complispace Assurance platform	Martin / Lisa
28/1/19	Whole staff meeting and planning -led by school principal Lisa O'Donnell	Most teaching staff & assistants
	Visioning/ SIP for 2019/ APS/ Peer Mentoring/ Establishing Staff Meeting protocols	
29/1/19	Registration for scope and sequence, template formatting, Assessment Triangulation and Rubric development. Workshops on Assessment for, as and of learning. Steiner education developing content for the new Science 'Digital Curriculum' strand. Child Protection. Francine: 2 regional meetings for the Early Childhood Association. Late in the year: Child Protection, Welfare, Fire. Lou Harvey 'Growing Children, Thriving Children'. Julie: Dance/ flamenco	All
7/2/19	Complispace Assurance Platform. Policies reviewed for Rego	All
13/02/19	Mandatory Reporting/ Child Protection Compliance	All Staff
14/2/19	Complispace Site Tour	All
28/2/19	1/ 4 Program development and policy update	All
01/4/19	Developing Fluency in Reading How to explicitly develop solid reading practises- Lisa/ Martin	Francine, Steph, Lisa
10/4/19	Student Welfare	All
weekly	Australian Professional Standards for Teachers and planning how we will work through this together	All
5/4/19	Weekly Study – A Study of Man- in preparation for 100 years of Steiner Education 2019	All
weekly	NCCD- Case Studies in relation to NCCD funding guides	All
28/5/19	NCCD- Case Studies in relation to NCCD funding guides	All
29/5/19	NCCD- Case Studies in relation to NCCD funding guides	All
30/5/19	4/6 Auslan interpreter info session	All
04/6/2019	Restorative Practice – Retraining for staff, students and parents	All
7/8/19	Program sharing/ New Scope and Sequences and discussion weekly	All
weekly	Child Study each term led by Francine	All
Once a term	Evidence based Peer Mentoring/ Staff Appraisals/ Professional Evaluation	All
Term 2 and 3	Steiner Education Regional Meeting	All
03/8/19	Duty of Care - AIS	Lisa
13/6/19	Connecting to Country- RAP: Mai-lynn Elliot, Jacinta Tobin, Paul Glass, Phil Foster	All teachers and Council Members

21/6/19 Class 3/4 OE trips	Steiner Schools Greek Olympics	Martin and Lisa
3/11/19	Bullying and Harassment	Martin
13/5/19	Traditional Custodian Work: Paul Glass	All council members
Class 5/6 trips	Scope and Sequence: Changes for NESA registration and how we can administer them	Martin and Lisa
14/12/19	9 staff socials (end of each term and to acknowledge Birthdays) throughout year (integral for team building)	All
		All

Individual Teachers	Professional Learning 2019
Lisa O'Donnell Principal/Class Teacher	Regional Principal's Meeting, AIS NCCD training, AIS Accreditation for Lead Teacher, New Privacy Laws, NESA registration – AIS, Bullying and Harassment – AIS, Duty of Care – AIS, Regional Steiner Conference, 12 Senses, weekly music tuition.
Freya Baska Craft teacher	Maori traditional weaving workshop. Viking ancient arts fellowship conference. Weekly dance tuition. AISNSW Australian Professional Standards for Teachers orientation sessions, August.
Stephanie Cassin College member / class teacher	Regional Steiner Conference, Knitting workshop, Glenaeon Classroom Teacher Training, 12 Senses, Duty of Care, weekly music tuition
Julie Humphreys Class Teacher (1.0)	Regional Steiner Conference (Lorien Novalis), Maths Concepts- Western Sydney Uni, Literacy Foundations AIS, International Dance Conference, weekly music tuition, ongoing Flamenco dance (for cultural studies) and workshop with internationally renowned Flamenco musician, Paco lara (musicology)
Francine O'Dea College member / kindy teacher	2 x Regional Early Childhood Meetings, Story Telling, 12 Senses, Duty of Care, Bullying and Harassment
Martin Buckmaster Chaplain (0.5) & Numeracy and Literacy Support (0.2)	First Aid, Mental Health First Aid, Lawsense, Duty of Care, Bullying and Harassment, Governance, Peer Support Australia,

Teaching Standards

For 2019

Category	Number of Teachers
Teachers who have teaching qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) guidelines, or	8
Teachers who have qualifications from a higher education institution within Australia or one recognised within the AEI-NOOSR guidelines but lack formal teacher qualifications, or	1
Teachers who do not have qualifications as described in (a) and (b) but have relevant successful teaching experience or appropriate knowledge relevant to the teaching context.	0

2019 Reporting Area 6

Workforce composition, including Indigenous

At any one time the workforce composition in 2019 consisted of 8 teaching staff (a full time equivalent of 5.3), 1 teaching staff/administration staff (Principal - a full-time equivalent of 1.0), 3 administrative staff (a full-time equivalent of 1.3), 5 Preschool staff (a full-time equivalent of 1.8) and 3 non-teaching support staff (a full-time equivalent of 0.8 non-teaching support staff). None of the school's staff members have reported being of indigenous origin.

Please refer to the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au> for further information on workforce composition, including Indigenous.

2019 Reporting Area 7

Student attendance (and retention rates in secondary schools – N/A)

Student attendance rates

During 2019 the average student attendance rate (across the grades K-6) for the year was 90.9% which is slightly higher than the daily attendance for 2019. It has been noted that attendance is lower across most of the grades in Term 2 (our Winter term). This could be attributed to the area the school is located which experiences marked seasonal changes and extreme changes in temperature particularly going into the winter season.

Individual Class Attendance figures:

Year Level	Attendance Rate %
Kindergarten	91.1
Class 1	91.4
Class 2	92.2
Class 3	93.6
Class 4	88.7
Class 5	89.4
Class 6	90.2

Management of non attendance

The school implements policy and procedures for the management of student non attendance. Parents/carers of students who are absent are requested to notify the school to explain the absence and parents are reminded of the procedure via the school newsletter. The school follows up where an explanation of the absence is not received from the parents. Absences are monitored and where there is an attendance issue (unsatisfactory attendance) the school will meet with parents/carers to resolve the issue. Mandatory reporting procedures apply where absences are extended or the students may be at risk.



Blue Mountains Steiner School

Policies and Procedures

ATTENDANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Date of review	Reviewed by:	Actions taken	Next review
July 2019	Principal	Made changes to procedures to reflect current practice. e.g responsibilities, late notes, Edumate procedures, addition procedures around Exemption from School added.	July 2020

CONTENTS

POLICY

1. Introduction
2. Purpose
3. Attendance and Punctuality
 - 3.1 Attendance Requirements
 - 3.2 Register of Enrolments/Admissions
 - 3.3 Monitoring Attendance
 - 3.4 Notice of Leave
4. Responsibilities
 - 4.1 Responsibilities of Principal
 - 4.2 Responsibilities of the School
 - 4.3 Responsibilities of the Teachers and Staff
5. Related Documents

ATTACHMENTS

- A: Application for Exemption for Attendance at School B:
Certificate for Exemption for Attendance at School

POLICY

Blue Mountains Steiner School's Attendance Policy seeks to ensure that government legislation and NESA requirements in relation to student attendance at primary school are followed. This policy includes processes and procedures to support school attendance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Education Act 1990 and the Education Amendment (School Attendance) Bill 2009 state that it is the parent or guardian's duty to ensure that their child(ren) 'attend the school at all times when the school is open for the child's instruction or participation in school activities' except when reasonable causes prevent attendance.

All parents with a child(ren) enrolled at Blue Mountains Steiner School must adhere to the rules regarding student attendance. Inconsistent attendance is considered to be detrimental to children's progress, and holidays in term time are discouraged for the same reason.

2. PURPOSE

To monitor the attendance of students at school in accordance with the provisions of the Education Act and to properly document student absences.

To set out the requirements for maintenance and retention of attendance and enrolment records.

3. ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Routine and rhythm are considered an important part of the school day at BMSS. Punctuality, which engenders a healthy respect for work and study, is also considered very important.

Students should be at school with enough time to feel relaxed and ready for when classes begin. The continuity and rhythm of lessons from day to day and from week to week are important and require attendance from beginning to end.

- It is essential that all students arrive at school on time.
- It is essential to the curriculum and the class that all students experience the opening of the day together.
- It is expected that students attend school except in cases of illness.
- It is expected that students complete the full school term with their class before going on vacation.

Students are to report to the Front Office accompanied by a parent/carer for late notes if they arrive after bell time or later during the day. Late notes are to be handed to the Class Teacher, or to the teacher taking the class at the time of arrival.

Students who leave early for any reason, e.g. medical appointments, must be signed out by a parent or carer at the Front Office before being collected from class.

3.1 ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

Under the Education Act 1990 and the Education Amendment (School Attendance) Bill 2009, attendance at school is necessary at all times while the school is open for the child's instruction or participation in school activities, except when reasonable causes prevent attendance. Reasonable causes may include:

- Illness.
- Other special leave requested from and approved by the school. Such special leave would include medical appointments or similar and other exceptional circumstances such as family emergencies.

In respect of illness, parents should notify the school by telephone, email or written note. In the case of absence for illness longer than 5 consecutive days the absence notification should be accompanied by a doctor's certificate.

Parents should be aware that if school attendance falls below acceptable levels without reasonable cause it may be necessary for the school to report the non attendance **to Family and Children's Services (FACS) under its obligations as a mandatory reporter.**

3.2 REGISTER OF ENROLMENTS/ADMISSIONS

Blue Mountains Steiner School maintains a Register of enrolments/admissions via its 'Edumate' Electronic Database System that includes the following information for each student:

- Name, age and address
- The name and contact number of parent(s)/ guardian(s)
- Date of enrolment and where appropriate the date of leaving the school and student's destination
- For students older than six (6) years, previous school or pre-enrolment situation

The register of enrolments is retained for least five (5) years before archiving and the register of attendance for a student is retained for at least seven (7) years after the last entry was made in respect of the student. Attendance archives are kept on the school database and in the archives.

3.3 MONITORING ATTENDANCE

Attendance is monitored by the Class Teacher, Front Office and School Principal. Parents/Carers are contacted by SMS on the day of any absence without notice. This includes children who arrive late to school without an explanation from a parent/carer.

Attendance is taken daily at the beginning of the school day by the Class Teacher in a roll book. (See Procedures Section: 3.0 'Marking of Rolls').

Absent children are recorded on an absentee slip which is returned to the Front Office where attendance is recorded in the school's database. Attendance reports are generated regularly and provided to the Principal for review. Any students in danger of falling below the required attendance level are referred to the Principal for follow up.

Where the school has unsuccessfully tried a range of strategies to help resolve a student's attendance problems the school may seek external assistance including from the Association of Independent Schools (AISNSW) to ensure the parents/carers are suitably supported to assist their child/ren to attend school.

3.4 NOTICE OF LEAVE

We require at least two weeks' notice made in writing by completing an *Application for Exemption for Attendance at School* Form (See Attachment A) for special leave to be approved. In this case, the approval of the school may be granted by the Principal and a Certificate for Exemption from Attendance of School will be provided to the parents/carers (see Attachment B).

If there has been no notification of a reason for absence, which has continued for more than one day, it is the responsibility of the Front Office to contact parents to determine the reason for absence.

The school regards non-compliance with this policy very seriously and any departure from it is to be referred to the Principal. At all times we expect students to be present during the normal hours of attendance. Absence for holidays during term time is considered unsatisfactory.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal will:

- Ensure structures and procedures are in place so that teachers are supported when dealing with attendance problems.
- Decide, in the case of unexplained or unjustified school absence, what form of school intervention is appropriate.
- Investigate all cases where a student has been absent without satisfactory explanation.
- Notify the parent/carer in writing where a student has a poor record of school or class attendance.
- Seek external assistance where required.

The Principal may grant exemptions from school attendance. The Principal is empowered under Section 25 of the *Education Act 1990* to grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student.

Exemption from school attendance should only be granted where conditions exist which make it necessary or desirable in the view of the Principal that a Certificate of Exemption be granted. These may include:

- Exceptional domestic circumstances, including but not limited to participation in family holidays during school term subject to being satisfied that this is in the best educational interests of the child;
- Other exceptional circumstances such as health of the student where sick leave or alternative enrolment is not appropriate;
- The child being prevented from attending school because of a direction under Section 42D of the *Public Health Act 1991*;
- Employment in the entertainment industry or participation in elite sporting events for short periods of time i.e. for one or two days, and at short notice;
- Other cases not specifically referred to in the above but where an exemption appears to be in the best interests of the child.

The Principal may refer cases to the Minister for Education (State Government) in cases where the exemption is considered not reasonable.

Where a student leaves BMSS without providing a forwarding address or information about which school the student will be attending, the Principal will:

- Forward a letter by Registered Post to the last known address of the family, and
- Notify the Home School Liaison Officer at the Department of Education and Training.

4.2 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

- BMSS will monitor the daily attendance and absence of students in the school by maintaining a weekly roll sheet for each class.
- Student absences, late arrivals and early departures will be identified and recorded in a consistent manner by the class teacher and Front Office staff. (*See Procedures Section 3.0 of this policy: 'Marking of Rolls'*).

- All absences including late arrivals and early departures require verbal or written notification from the parent/carer stating date and reason for absence.
- Unexplained absences from classes or school will be followed up on the same day via an SMS.
- Where unsatisfactory class or school attendance is identified, the attendance issue and any action taken will be recorded in the student's file.

4.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TEACHERS AND STAFF

Class teachers will:

- Provide an example of punctuality and responsibility in their class commitments.
- Ensure that weekly attendance sheets are filled out and sent to the Front Office in a timely manner.
- Follow up cases of inconsistent attendance with the parents concerned.
- Communicate with the Front Office in relation to recording late arrivals and early departures.
- Notify the Principal of any absence concerns as they arise.

The Front Office Staff will:

- Maintain the school's database with up-to-date information on student attendance.
- Follow up with parents/carers via SMS, email or phone asking for an explanation for absence on the day of absence.(see Section 1.3).
- Provide printed reports on student attendance as required to either parents, teacher or the Principal.

All staff are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this policy are met and the correct procedures are followed appropriately.

The Education Manager in consultation with the Principal and the Management Team is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to throughout the school.

5. RELATED DOCUMENTS

Application for Exemption for Attendance at School Form
 Certificate for Exemption for Attendance at School Form
 AIS Sample Letters to Parents notifying them of absence concern
 Student Attendance Improvement Plan
 The Education Act 1990
 Education Amendment (School Attendance) Bill 2009

6.0 AUTHORISATION

Principal

 Name Signature Date

PROCEDURES

1. **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the attendance procedures is to facilitate the following expectations and requirements:

- To ensure that all students arrive at school on time To support the curriculum and the class by ensuring that all students experience the opening of the day together.
- To ensure that students attend school (regular classes and school activities) except in cases of illness.
- To ensure that students complete the full school term with their class before going on vacation.
- To ensure that all cases of unexplained absence are investigated promptly and appropriate intervention strategies are implemented. (e.g *Student Attendance Improvement Plan*)
- To ensure that school staff are trained to implement school attendance policies and procedures.
- To ensure that parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements.

2. **PROCEDURES**

2.1 **The Attendance Roll**

Rolls are provided to all Class Teachers at the beginning of each school year in a format that is in accordance with the Education Act (1990) (Section 24).

Rolls must be maintained on all days on which the school is open for instruction, including school sports days, excursions, camps and similar events.

The exception method (marking absences only) is to be followed by all teachers. Only the codes listed in the front of the Roll are to be used.

School absences must be recorded on the Roll early in the school day and absentee slips should be returned to the Office by 9.30am (only acceptable exception is when classes are away on camps or excursions. Students involved in off-site activities organised by the school must not be marked as absent.)

Staff responsible for maintaining Rolls must be acquainted with requirements of this document and correct procedures for maintaining the Roll.

The Class Teachers responsible for maintaining the Rolls are to sign the Roll each day in the place indicated.

Where an alteration is necessary on the Roll a line is to be ruled through the entry and the correct entry made above. Correction fluid must not be used.

2.2 **Students who are Suspended from School**

The correct attendance register code symbol for suspension is to be used to denote the absences of students whilst on (out of school) suspension, 'E'. This symbol is to be used only for the duration of the suspension and must not be applied to students who fail to return to school following the suspension period. In such cases, the student's absence would be unjustified and recorded accordingly as 'A'.

2.3 **Security of Rolls**

Rolls must be stored in a secure location within the school.

Rolls must not be removed from school premises unless removal is warranted by exceptional circumstances such as fire or flood. Teachers must not take Rolls home.

The loss of a Roll is a serious occurrence and must be reported immediately to the Front Office staff.

A new Roll should be commenced immediately. Attendance information referring to absences on occasions prior to the commencement of the new Roll must not be included.

A notice signed by the Principal must be attached to the new Roll. The notice must state the period for which the original Roll was a record of student attendance and the date from which the replacement Roll commences.

At the end of each school year the Principal must ensure that the Rolls and attached special circumstances are preserved as a complete record of student's absences for that year.

2.4 Database entry of Attendance Data

School Attendance information is entered daily into the school's 'Edumate' database.

This data entry is completed by Front Office staff who have been trained to use the 'Edumate' Attendance Module.

In weeks 5 and 10 (approx.) of every term an attendance report is generated, printed and forwarded to the Principal for review.

2.5 Follow up of Unexplained Absences

Each morning when absentee slips have been returned to the Front Office, reception staff are to make note of any unexplained absences of students. Unexplained absences are as follows:

- Absences where no phone call, phone message or email explaining the absence has been received by either the Front Office staff or by the responsible Teacher and where the student is not known to be unwell via prior recent communication.
- The student has arrived late to school and not collected a 'Late Arrival/Early Leave' slip on arrival.

In each instance of an unexplained absence Front Office staff are to contact the student's parent or carer by SMS to enquire about the reason for the absence. A written memo outlining the reason for absence is to be inserted into the Roll.

Parents are to be courteously reminded that it is their responsibility to advise the school about their child's absence from school.

If parents/carers cannot be contacted a letter should be sent to them by the Principal.

The Principal may decline to accept as satisfactory an explanation for an absence. The parent should be advised that the explanation has not been accepted and a reason for the decision provided.

The Principal may request medical certificates or other documentation when absences explained as being due to illness are frequent or prolonged.

2.8 Approved Leave - Extended Leave - Travel Applications

The School may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence and which has been accepted by the Principal.

Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the discretion of

the Principal in consultation with the Management Team.

At least two days' notice in writing is required for special leave to be approved. In this case, the approval may be granted by the Principal.

2.9 Exemption from Attendance

The Principal may grant an exemption from school attendance for periods totalling up to 100 days in a 12 month period for any one student in accordance with the provisions of Section 25 of the Education Act (1990).

3.1 MARKING OF ROLLS

3.2 Manual Rolls

Symbols to be used where students are absent from school Symbol Meaning

a The student was absent on that day.

Pa The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence

Note: The following symbols should be recorded above the **a** or **Pa** symbol as appropriate

Symbol Meaning

A The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.

S The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases: a medical certificate is provided or the absence was due to sickness and the Principal accepts this explanation. The Principal may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the duration of the absence is more than four days.

L The Principal may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the Principal. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the Principal's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the Principal. This may be due to:

- misadventure or unforeseen event
- participation in special events not related to the school
- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.

E The student was suspended from school.

M The student was exempted from attending school.

B The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the Principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake:

- school sport (regional and state carnivals)
- school excursions.

H The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis with the full knowledge and approval of the school. The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:

- tutorial centre and programs
- behaviour centres
- hospital schools.

3.3 Electronic Rolls

Symbols to be used where students are absent from school Symbol Meaning

W The student was absent on that day.

P The student was late or was absent for part of a day. The time of arrival or departure must be recorded.

Symbols to be used for explanation of student absence

Note: The following symbols should be recorded above the **a** or **Pa** symbol as appropriate

Symbol Meaning

A The student's absence is unexplained or unjustified. This symbol must be used if no notice has been provided by parents within seven days of the occurrence of the absence.

S The student's absence is due to sickness or as the result of a medical or paramedical appointment. In these cases:

- a medical certificate is provided or
- the absence was due to sickness and the principal accepts this explanation. The Management Group may request a medical certificate in addition to explanations if the explanation is doubted or the duration of the absence is more than four days.

L The Management Group may record up to 15 days in a school year for students of compulsory school age who have provided an explanation of the absence which has been accepted by the Management Team. Additional days for students not of compulsory school age may be recorded at the Management Team's discretion. This symbol is recorded where a student's absence is due to reasons accepted by the principal. This may be due to:

- misadventure or unforeseen event
- participation in special events not related to the school
- domestic necessity such as serious illness of an immediate family member
- attendance at funerals
- recognised religious festivals or ceremonial occasions.

E The student was suspended from school.

M The student was exempted from attending school.

B The student is absent from the school on official school business. This symbol is recorded where the principal approves the student leaving the school site to undertake:

- work experience
- school sport (regional and state carnivals)
- school excursions.

H The student is attending two or more education settings for a period of time (shared enrolment). This symbol is recorded where a student accesses a specialist educational setting on a sessional or full-time basis with the full knowledge and approval of the school.

The symbol is recorded where a student accesses education settings separate to their mainstream school such as:

- tutorial centre and programs
- behaviour centres
- hospital schools.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

All teaching staff are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of this procedure are met and the correct procedures are followed appropriately.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring this policy is adhered to throughout the school.

5.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

Attendance Policy

Exemption from Attendance at School Form Certificate of Exemption for Attendance at School
Student Attendance Improvement Plan Document

6.0 AUTHORISATION

On behalf of The Management Team

.....
Name	Signature	Date:
Date created:	12 June 2019	
Date Revised:	12 June 2020	

Attachment A:



Blue Mountains Steiner School

Application for Exemption from Attendance at School

To be completed by the student's parent/carer

Please read the following information carefully.

1. Government law requires students between the ages of 6 - 16 to attend School on each teaching day.
2. Lengthy absences or inconsistent attendance can have serious consequences for children's academic, social, behavioral and mental well-being.
3. The Principal is empowered to grant exemption from school attendance for periods up to 100 days/year, but must carefully take into account the educational consequences of such leave.
4. Parents are required to apply in advance to the Principal for any student exemption from attendance for all circumstances other than sickness over one week.
5. Parents are strongly encouraged to organize family holidays within school holiday time.
6. **Where family holidays will result in students missing 3 weeks or more of school, parents/guardians are required to meet with the Principal to discuss how the student's educational and social needs will be addressed.**
7. Parents/guardians will be responsible for the payment of full term fees.

STUDENT DETAILS

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Class: _____

Student address: _____ Postcode: _____

DATES

Date of exemption applied for: ____/____/20__ to ____/____/20__

Number of school days absent: _____

REASON FOR APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION (Please tick one)

- ☐ Employment reasons
- ☐ Exclusion under Section 42D of the Public Health Act 1991, relating to an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease
- ☐ Financial Reasons
- ☐ Exceptional family circumstances, including family holidays
- ☐ Other exceptional circumstances, including special medical grounds

Please provide details about the reason for the application for exemption from attendance here:

PARENT/GUARDIAN DETAILS

Family name: _____ Given name(s): _____

Parent/guardian address: _____ Postcode: _____

Contact number: _____ Relationship to student: _____

As the parent/guardian of the above mentioned student, I hereby apply for a Certificate of Exemption from attendance at school, under the Education Act 1990. I understand that if the exemption is granted:

☐ I am responsible for his/her supervision and education during the period of exemption.

☐ The exemption is limited to the period indicated.

☐ I understand that I am responsible for my child/ren's school fees during their absence.

NB. Under exceptional circumstances you may be eligible for a discount of fees. If you wish to apply for this please provide supporting documentation to be considered by the Business Manager (i.e. medical certificate, proof of emergency).

Signature of applicant/s: _____

Date: _____

Signature of Principal: _____

Date: _____

Office		Principal	Bus Manager (only if fee related)
Enter absence in Edumate	Email Class Teacher	Date:	Date:
Date:		Sign:	Sign:
Sign:			

Attachment B:



**Blue Mountains
Steiner School**

Certificate for Exemption from Attendance at School under Section 25 of the *Education Act 1990*

The student whose details appear below has been granted an exemption from attendance for the period indicated.

STUDENT DETAILS

Family name:

Given name(s):

Date of birth:

Address:

Postcode:

Date of exemption from:

Reason for the exemption:

Conditions of the exemption: (Note: for a part day exemption the hours of program participation must be specified, including the plan to have the student attend school full time).

As the parent of the above mentioned student, I am responsible for his/her supervision during the period of exemption. I understand that this exemption is limited to the period indicated. I understand that this exemption is subject to the conditions listed and that the exemption may be cancelled at any time.

Name of parent: _____

Signature of parent: _____

Principal: _____

Signature of Principal: _____ **Date:** ____/____/____

**This certificate has been issued without alteration and must be produced
when requested by police or other authorised attendance officers**

2019 Reporting Area 8

Post school destinations (for secondary schools only)

N/A

2019 Reporting Area 9

Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body

Student Population

- During 2019 Blue Mountains Steiner School had up to 122 students enrolled from Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten (Sessional Kindergarten) through to Class 6 over the year (74 students in K-6, and by the end of 2019, 48 in preschool). As it is a comprehensive school and inclusiveness is part of the school's philosophy, the students come from a range of backgrounds, including low socio-economic backgrounds. The school aims to keep an even balance between the ratio of girls and boys though this is not always possible. During 2019, there have been no students enrolled with differing special needs and five students of Indigenous Australian origin. Please refer to the My School website: <http://www.myschool.edu.au> for further information on the characteristics of the student body.

Blue Mountains Steiner School

Policies and Procedures



Enrolment Policy & Procedures

Policy

This Policy has been set as a guide to help make the choice of sending one's child to the Blue Mountains Steiner School as conscious as possible for the prospective parent or guardian and the school.

ENROLMENT PROCESS

1. Enquiry

Initial enquiries are directed to the Office Administrator for an information pack or to sign up to attend an Open Morning.

2. Open Morning/Tour

All prospective families are encouraged to visit the Primary School for an Open Morning or Tour.

3. Application

An Enrolment Application should be submitted to the Office Administrator, to secure a position on the School's waiting list. The form must be accompanied by relevant documentation and the Enrolment Application Fee.

4. Waiting list

Once this information is received and processed, the child is placed on the waiting list.

5. Interview

Prospective families and students will be invited to attend an interview with the appropriate Head of School and undertake any appropriate standardised testing.

6. Offer of a Place

Once it has been determined that a place exists in a year group and any relevant support or enrichment programs, prospective students are formally offered a place. Parents are asked to confirm acceptance of that place by paying the non-refundable Confirmation Fee and signing the Conditions of Enrolment.

7. Orientation

Orientation events are held regularly towards the end of each year prior to entry, or when the opportunity allows for mid-year intakes.

Blue Mountains Steiner School is an inclusive, secular, co-educational K-6 primary school providing an education underpinned by the philosophy and values of Steiner education and registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA).

This policy gives guidance to those within the Blue Mountains Steiner School community and to those who would join it, concerning enrolment criteria and procedures. While the policy is as comprehensive as possible, there will inevitably be some situations which are not specifically covered. In such instances, it is the Principal's responsibility to decide the appropriate course to take in the circumstances.

Throughout this policy, unless the context requires otherwise, reference to parents includes guardians or any other person who has applied to have a child entered on the waiting list or enrolled at the School and, where the child has only one parent, means that parent.

New Enquiries

Administration will send prospective parents enquiring about the School's enrolment procedure:

- A Prospectus
- A Fee Schedule, detailing the school fees and payment options
- An Enrolment Information brochure containing:
Information about the Enrolment Procedure and Standard Collection Notice
- An Application for Enrolment
- A copy of the Conditions of Enrolment

Waiting Lists

The Principal is responsible for the maintenance of waiting lists for entry to the School.

Entrance to the School is normally in Pre-School or Kindergarten, Entrance at other year levels is limited to vacancies which may occur from time to time. Entrance may be accommodated at any time throughout the school year depending on circumstances.

Names of children will be entered on the appropriate waiting list when their parent(s) or guardian(s) return:

- a) the Enrolment Application form (signed by both parents);
- b) the non-refundable Enrolment Application Fee of \$55 per child;
- c) a copy of the child's birth certificate or current visa confirming student citizenship or permanent residency status.
- d) copies of the child's last two school reports (if existing); and latest NAPLAN results (for Years other than Pre-School and Kindergarten);
- e) a copy of an up to date immunisation certificate;
- f) contact details of two family referees who are not close relatives of the parents and who have known and interacted with the parents for at least five years (the references must focus on the parents themselves);
- g) all medical, psychological or other reports about the child in their possession or control; and
- h) other information about the child which the School considers necessary.

Failure to provide all required information may result in the School declining to enter the child's name on the appropriate waiting list or delaying such entry, and may also result in the School declining or delaying the child's enrolment.

Assessment

The School will undertake an assessment process at some time decided by the School after a child's name has been entered on the Waiting List. As part of the assessment process, the School may ask the parents to provide more information about the child.

Any assessments or reports required from non-school personnel will be at the parents' expense. In considering all prospective enrolments, the School may ask parents to authorise the Principal or his or her delegate to contact:

- (a) the Principal of the child's previous school to obtain or confirm information pertaining to the child or the child's enrolment;

- (b) any medical or other personnel considered significant for providing information pertaining to the needs of the child.

Where information obtained by the School suggests:

- (a) a profile of wilful misconduct, illegal activities or strong anti-social behaviours that indicate that the child's enrolment at the School is likely to be detrimental to other students, the staff or the School; or
- (b) the parents may not be able to meet the financial commitment required by having a child at the School, notwithstanding that the child be the sibling of a current student, the Principal may decline to proceed any further with the enrolment process.

Disability

While the School will not suit all children, there is no reason in principle that children with disabilities cannot be eligible to enrol. Indeed, the School has, since its inception, enrolled students with disabilities. Please refer to the Schedule – Disability of this policy for the School's policy regarding disability. The School will follow this policy when assessing an application for a child with a disability.

Interview

When a position becomes available, the School will at its discretion invite the parents of a child on the waiting list to attend an interview with the Principal and class teacher. At the interview, among other things, the School will:

- (a) inform the parents of their responsibility to the School in relation to fees and will ascertain their ability to afford the current fees;
- (b) will seek to establish that the expectations and commitments of the parents are consistent with the vision, values, goals, policies and resources of the School.

School reserves rights

The School reserves the right not to offer any child a place at the School or to defer the offer of a place to any child in its discretion but particularly when the parents, having been aware of their child's specific educational needs, decline to declare those needs or to withhold relevant information pertaining to their child.

The School also reserves the right to terminate an enrolment where the parents have not declared or have withheld known information pertaining to their child's needs.

The School reserves the right to determine the appropriate year of entry for each student. School's considerations when considering making offers of a place at the School, the School gives preference to:

- (a) brothers or sisters of students already at the School; and
- (b) siblings, sons or daughters or grandsons or granddaughters of alumni of the School.

The School also considers: evidence of a place at a similar independent school elsewhere in Australia if a family relocates from interstate; a student's willingness and ability to contribute to the wider life of the School; evidence of good leadership and good character and the date of lodgement of the Enrolment Application.

Offer

At the satisfactory conclusion of the assessment process, the School may make an offer to the parents to enrol the child. To accept the offer, the parents must within 30 days of receiving it deliver to the School:

- (a) a signed copy of the Conditions of Enrolment which confirms acceptance by the parents of the then current Conditions of Enrolment;
- (b) the non-refundable Enrolment Fee of \$400 (this is a per family fee).

Failure to reply within the required time may result in the position being withdrawn and re-offered to another child waiting for entry to the School.

The Enrolment Fee is additional to tuition and other fees.

Change of Year of Entry

Parents may request the Registrar to change the year of entry for a student. Such requests must be in writing and approval is at the discretion of the Principal or his/her delegate. If a change of year of entry is approved, the student's name returns to the waiting list for the new year of entry, retaining the initial application date. The assessment process, including the interview, will recommence. If the Enrolment Fee has been paid, it does not need to be paid again.

Kindergarten age of entry

Entry into Kindergarten

Children need to turn 5 on or before 30th April of the year they enter into Kindergarten. All children must undertake a readiness for school assessment. If parents have already indicated specific learning needs, an alternative and/or additional assessment process may be required.

For those who do not turn 6 until after the end of the fourth term of the proposed year of entry, and who are assessed as being not yet ready for school, the Principal may require an additional assessment process to be undertaken to determine whether or not the child has specific learning needs. Unless specific learning needs are identified, the Principal reserves the right to defer the enrolment to the following year.

In respect of any prospective enrolment, the School reserves the right to have members of its staff visit the child's preschool, early intervention centre or (with the parents agreement) the home, to more accurately assess the learning needs of the child.

Schedule – Disability

Relevant Legislation

- Disability Discrimination Act
- Sex Discrimination Act
- Race Discrimination Act
- Anti-Discrimination Act

These Acts make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability, sex, or race by refusing to enrol them at the School. The School is committed to fulfilling its obligations under the law in this Enrolment Policy.

Definition

Disability, in relation to a child, means:

- a) total or partial loss of the child's bodily or mental functions; or
- b) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or
- c) the presence in the body of organisms causing disease or illness; or
- d) the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing disease or illness; or
- e) the malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of the child's body; or
- f) a disorder or malfunction that results in the child learning differently from a child without the disorder or malfunction; or
- g) a disorder, illness or disease that affects a child's thought processes, perception of reality, emotions or judgment or that results in disturbed behaviour;
- h) and includes a disability that:
 - (i) presently exists; or
 - (ii) previously existed but no longer exists; or
 - (iii) may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability); or
 - (iv) is imputed to a person.

To avoid doubt, a disability that is otherwise covered by this definition includes behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of the disability.

Disability Policy in the Enrolment process

Where a child has declared education support needs or a disability or other information has come to light indicating a possible need for education support services or for some measures or actions to assist the child to participate in the School's courses or programs or to use the School's facilities or services, the School will make an initial assessment of the child's needs. This will include consultation with the child or the child's parents. In addition, the Principal may:

- (a) require the parents to provide medical, psychological or other reports from specialists outside the School.

- (b) obtain an independent assessment of the child.

Where information obtained by the School indicates that the child has a disability, the Principal or his/her delegate will seek to identify the exact nature of the child's needs and the strategies required to address them. Having obtained this information, the Principal will determine whether the child, if enrolled, would require some measures or actions to assist the child to participate in the School's courses or programs or to use the School's facilities or services that are not required by students who do not have the child's disability. Where the Principal determines that the child would require some such measures or actions, the Principal will seek to identify whether those measures or actions required are reasonable in that they balance the interests of all parties affected. In assessing whether a particular measure or action for a particular child is reasonable, the Principal will have regard to all the relevant circumstances and interests, including:

- (a) the child's disability;
- (b) the views of the child or the child's parents about:
 - (i) whether the particular measure or action is reasonable;
 - (ii) the extent to which the particular measure or action would ensure that the child was able to participate in the School's courses or programs or to use the School's facilities or services on the same basis as a child without the disability;
- (c) the effect of the adjustment on the child, including the effect on the child's:
 - (i) ability to achieve learning outcomes; and
 - (ii) ability to participate in courses or programs; and
 - (iii) independence;
- (d) the effect of the particular measure or action on anyone else affected, including the School, its staff and other students;
- (e) the costs and benefits of taking the particular measure or action.

The School will take measures and actions that are reasonable but will not necessarily take measures or actions that are unreasonable or that would impose unjustifiable hardship on the School. In determining whether taking the required measures or actions, even though they are reasonable, would impose unjustifiable hardship on the School, the Principal will take into account all relevant circumstances of the case, including:

- (a) the nature of the benefit or detriment likely to accrue or be suffered by any persons concerned (including other students, staff, the School, the child, the family of the child, and the School community); and
- (b) the effect of the disability of the child; and
- (c) the School's financial circumstances and the estimated amount of expenditure required to be made by the School; and
- (d) the availability of financial and other assistance to the School.

Where the Principal determines that the enrolment of the child would require the School to take unreasonable measures or actions to ensure that the child is able to participate in the School's courses or programs, or to use the School's facilities and services, on the same basis as a student without a disability, or would cause unjustifiable hardship, the Principal may decline the offer of a position or defer the offer.

2019 Reporting Area 10

School policies

Policies for

- Student welfare
- Discipline
- Reporting Serious Complaints Policy

A. Policies for Student Welfare 2019

Blue Mountains Steiner School seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which:

- minimises risk of harm and ensures students feel secure
- supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students
- provides student welfare policies and programmes that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development.

To ensure that all aspects of the school's mission for providing for a student's welfare are implemented, the following policies and procedures were in place during 2016.

To gain a full understanding of policies for student welfare, it is essential to look at the following policies along with those listed under 'Policies for Student Discipline' as there is a cross over between providing students with an environment that assists them with appropriate conduct. For example, teacher supervision of students is covered in our school's "Student Code of Behaviour and Discipline Policy".

The full texts of the school's policies for student welfare and associated procedures are available to all members of the school community via:

- The School Office (hardcopies are available from the school office)
- The policy folders kept in each classroom/school building
- e-mail (contact the school office admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au)

Full texts of the school's policies are also distributed to the school community from time to time through the fortnightly school newsletter.

Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy

Wisdom in the spirit
Love in the soul
Strength in the will
These shall guide me
These shall hold me
In them I trust, to them
I give my life
Rudolf Steiner

Compliance

The College of Teachers has developed these procedures to comply with section 105 of the *Education Act 2004*. These are to give clear directions to staff on the following:

- roles and responsibilities of staff and parents under specific circumstances relating to suspension, exclusion and transfer.
- Requirements for supervision and re-entry
- Alternatives for continuing the child's education

A copy of the policy and procedures are to be made available to children and parents of the school community.

Introduction

This verse encapsulates the spirit of our attitude towards ourselves as teachers and towards the children in our school.

The aim of the Pastoral Care and Positive Behaviour Policy is to give the children a clear understanding of how we believe they should act towards themselves and others.

This is achieved by stating the rights and responsibilities we have for ourselves and for others as well as the rules of behaviour to be followed.

Appropriate and acceptable behaviour is that behaviour which supports mutual rights, safety and fair treatment of others.

"The challenge in discipline is that you have to represent both grace and justice at the same time" (S Levy, 1996). The child should not be shamed in front of others but inspired to act in an appropriate manner while ensuring in the eyes of others that justice has been done.

The aim of Blue Mountains Steiner School is to promote the discipline of self-control, cultivate virtuous qualities and acting for the welfare of others.

Discipline is a response to individuals and situations in such a way as to lead to the development of skills that promote responsibility and accountability. Such responses are different at differing age levels. What is appropriate in the Kindergarten will be different in the Primary school. Through recognition of the implications of the stages of child development (as given by Rudolf Steiner) certain forms and rhythms are set in place so that the individuality of the child is protected and safety is ensured. The rhythms that are established may include the

daily and weekly rhythms of the timetable, the monthly Main Lesson subject, the seasonal celebrations or how many times per day the teacher shakes students' hands. Form may include the school's accepted social manners and etiquette, the structure of sitting in a circle at the beginning of the school day, attendance, type of food brought to school, the act of shaking the teacher's hand or the way the school day begins and ends (things that uphold the school's ethos and social form). These rhythms and forms encourage the progression from outer discipline (as in Kindergarten, where through imitation the child is enfolded in a form totally conceived by the teacher) to inner (self) discipline as the child matures, culminating in adulthood.

Kindergarten – in these years, the child is most imitative and open and lives in an implicit confidence of goodness and love. The child models his/her behaviour on those adults most central or significant to his/her life. The adult, therefore, strives to be worthy as example – in thought, word and deed.

Primary – in these years, the authority of the teacher (adult) is fundamental. The child is disciple, (related to the root sense of discipline), and the teacher is author, (related to the root sense of authority). At heart, all children at this age naturally seek the security of this relationship.

The discipline between teacher and child will best operate if the teacher inspires a rich appreciation of the wholeness and beauty of the world i.e., if a reverent and artistic dimension to life is nurtured. The imparting of knowledge and the inspiration for learning should be thought of as an art in themselves. Also, in Steiner Education, the teacher should have an unquestioned authority that arises quite naturally and is developed over years with his/her class. This authority is not expressed in a fixed way, but is creative and mobile, changing to meet new situations as the child grows older.

The forms and rhythms created by the Class Teacher provide a sense of security (students know what happens when) that protects and nurtures the child while allowing spontaneity and expression of individuality.

Policy Position Statement

- It is the expectation of the School that all students will adhere to the School's code of behaviour and all the rules stated in this document.
- Non-compliance with the School code of conduct and rules will be addressed in accordance with procedure laid down in this document.
- *Corporal punishment is prohibited. Staff (this includes volunteers and parents on school grounds or involved in any school activities both on or off site) must not, under any circumstances, use any form of discipline or behaviour management that involves corporal punishment or engage in any form of behaviour that could constitute the physical or emotional abuse of students.*

Rights

Teachers have a right to teach in a friendly, safe and satisfying school which is supported by the school community.

Children have a right to learn, play and work in a friendly, safe and helpful school.

Parents have the right to feel welcome and know their children work, play and learn in a friendly safe and helpful school.

Everyone has the right to:

- feel safe
- be treated with honesty
- be spoken to and treated with respect and dignity.
- be treated fairly
- be touched only in a respectful way.
- personal space.
- say “no” to physical contact.
- expect others to hear and respect individual feelings.
- have gender, culture, religion and differences accepted.
- co-operative participation in school activities.
- a safe and clean environment.
- have property treated with care.

Out of the above flows a need to be aware of the responsibilities we have to each other and our school.

Responsibilities

Responsibility is being aware of our conduct and being accountable for it.

Teachers have the responsibility to consistently implement the behaviour code and to reflect in their behaviour the values that are expected from others.

Children have the responsibility to be co-operative.

Parents have the responsibility to be supportive of the Steiner philosophy, the teachers and the policies of the school.

Everyone has the responsibility to:

- allow others to feel safe.
- be honest
- speak and treat others with respect and dignity
- treat others fairly
- touch others only in a respectful way.
- accept the personal space of others.
- respect the feelings of others.
- respect the gender, culture, religion and differences of others.
- participate co-operatively in school activities.
- help maintain a safe and clean environment.
- treat their own and other people's property with care.

How Parents can Support Teachers

To achieve giving the children a Steiner Education, the teachers at our school would like parents to acknowledge that they are aware of, and support these expectations:

- ensure punctuality
- support us to get specialist help or diagnoses outside of school where it is required
- ensure that children have enough sleep and come to school rested – no late nights on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday
- ensure that children have a healthy diet

- TV, videos and computer games to be minimized, none before school and to be kept age appropriate (the school has plenty of educational resources on the effects that TV, videos and computer games can have on the developing child – please ask).
- no violent movies, videos or computer games
- follow through with agreements made with teachers
- support children's home duties and homework
- discuss the School's Code of Behaviour and Discipline policy with your child/children.
- contact with the class teacher if problems occur
- where grievances arise follow the 'Grievance Policy'

Our school does not have the resources to provide counselling and other services. We ask parents to seek outside help for their children if needed. The school is there to assist in this process if required. Please see our 'Student Welfare Communications policy'.

How Teachers can Support Students

Teachers can support students by clearly explaining school rules and expectations, being good role models, being organised, consistent and respectful and engaging in a process of self-evaluation (see lesson checklist).

The following information will help teachers to understand their duties, find links to other relevant policies and guide students.

School Rules

General

Children are to:

- speak to each other respectfully
- keep hands and feet to themselves (this rule will be enforced by the school according to lessons, play, age and gender appropriateness)
- look after school and personal property
- follow instructions given by staff
- act and move safely
- be in the right place on time
- use internal pathways
- participate in an environment of “it’s ok to tell” along side the guidance of their teachers

Children are not to:

- be in the classrooms without a teacher
- bully other children
- go out of bounds or climb trees
- display inappropriate, exclusive or overextended physical contact or affection (this rule is age and gender specific)

Play Areas

- Kindergarten - only in Kindergarten
- Paved areas and veranda’s in front of classrooms 1 & 2 (Eucalypt and Angophora Buildings) – classes 1 & 2
- Paved areas and veranda’s in front of hex buildings (Banksia and Hakea Buildings) - all classes
- Breezeway - all classes
- Amphitheatre – all classes
- Court for Classes 3,4,5,6 on roster basis
- Bush area for classes 2,3,4,5,6 on a roster basis
- Cubbies must be dismantled at the end of each term. Disputes over cubby materials should be referred to the duty teacher. Wood only.

Out of Bounds

- Paved area in front of classes 1 & 2 for all other classes
- Car park
- Knoll area
- Blackberry / bush areas (behind amphitheatre fence)
- Mini oval
- Behind or under class rooms
- Areas to be determined for special events and events out of school hours

Bell Times: Monday – Thursday

- 9.00 a.m. Inside time – Morning Circle and Main Lesson
11.30 a.m. Inside time – Middle Lessons
1.45 p.m. Inside time – Afternoon Lessons

1. Eating time for morning tea 11.00am to 11.10 am - eating in classroom with class teacher
 2. Eating time for lunch 12.55 to 1.05 – eating in classroom with class teacher
- During morning tea and lunch eating times, play areas out of bounds.
 - If classes have extended play-time, the class teacher is responsible. The teacher should have children within his/her sight. The play needs to be away from classrooms.
 - Teachers need to be on duty by 11.10 am and 1.05 pm
 - If children arrive late to class after morning tea and lunch, class teacher follows up with consequences
 - No children in classroom during recess and lunch unless supervised by a teacher additional to the rostered duty teacher.

Friday Bell Times and break times are different. See Duty Timetable.

Wet Weather

- Annual duty allocated to **class one teacher** for 'wet weather' decision – teacher to send runner to other classes to advise of wet weather.
- Children to play under cover area closest to their classroom.
- Children can only go into classroom for quiet activities (no running around) if supervised by a teacher.
- Teachers supervise their own class.

Hats

- Hats to be worn outside at all times.
- No hat, no play – one reminder only - children put on hats before going out to morning tea, lunch.
- If no hat, then must stay on breezeway.
- Shoes must be worn at all times.
- See 'Clothing Policy' and 'Sun Protection Policy'.

Food

- See 'Food Policy'

Bullying Behaviour

- 'Behaviour – Our Approach to Bullying Policy'

Violent and Aggressive Behaviour

- 'Violent or Aggressive Behaviour Policy and Procedures'

Transport (mini bus, bus and train)

- 'Transport Policy'

Supervision of Students / Duty

- 'Duty Guidelines for Teachers'
- Duty Roster for current term
- Duty of Care – Information Sheet for AIS NSW Member Schools
- Attachment 1 to Code of Professional Practice – Code of Conduct for the Care and Protection of Children

Levels of Behaviour Management

Teachers in our school seek to encourage positive behaviour. Appropriate or acceptable behaviour is that behaviour which supports mutual rights, safety and fair treatment of self and others.

Teachers must at all times reflect in their behaviour, the values that are expected of students to be courteous and respectful to all others.

Teachers must consistently implement the school's behaviour code and follow through on all breaches promptly and with procedural fairness.

Procedures for fair disciplinary action at any level require staff to:

- Conduct investigations without undue delay
- Ensure that they do not decide a case in which they have a conflict of interest
- Act fairly and without bias
- Outline the alleged behaviour
- Allow the student to respond (the student may be allowed put their case orally or in writing)
- Consider the response
- Make reasonable inquiries or investigations before making a decision
- Indicate the school's view and likely action to the student, parents / guardians
- Consider any further comment or appeal particularly in relation to suspension, expulsion or exclusion
- Make a final decision

Use the “**Behaviour Incident Report / Statement form**” for reporting incidents and the “**Unacceptable Behaviour Report Form**” according to the level indicated on the following tables. For incidents that involve ‘bullying’ use this policy in conjunction with the ‘Behaviour – Our Approach to Bullying Policy’.

In the following tables, levels of behaviour have been defined, which apply to the breakdown of the rights and responsibilities as discussed above. The emphasis here is on leading, guiding, encouraging and instructing.

The following proactive strategies will be implemented by staff to encourage acceptable behaviour:

- lesson and classroom management planning (see ‘Behaviour Management Lesson Checklist’ for teachers)
- punctual supervision
- encouraging children to see that alerting a teacher to problems in the play area is not ‘dobbing’ but helps to create a positive social environment through communication
- using discussion, stories, role plays in class to explore the effects of bullying and or other forms of violation. Additionally, the class curriculum should reflect the importance of peer respect and support, good communication skills and problem solving
- clear rules communicated in class and through assemblies about what kinds of games can be played where, play ground boundaries etc

Levels of Behaviour Management **Related to the Classroom**

Level	Student Behaviour	Teacher Action, Consequences and Strategies	Extra Support
0	Student adheres to school rules. Student respects the rights of self and others, is co-operative and self-controlled.	The aim here is to encourage and acknowledge the student. Positively reinforce behaviour with appropriate comments and specific feedback.	Involve colleagues in recognition of student's achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> assemblies positive behaviours noted
1	Is involved in minor disruptions of low intensity and frequency. For example: Distracting others Finger tapping Off task Calling out Out of seat Passing note Not following instruction Not participating Not keeping hands to self Note: If any of these behaviours persist or are displayed at a higher intensity see next level.	The aim here is to make child/ren <i>conscious</i> of error and redirect into appropriate behaviour Active Options: Start with warning or reminder – 3 only. Questioning and clarification “Is there something I can do to help?” Expression of disapproval or disappointment. Clarify rights/rules about safety, respect and care. Consequences of behaviour outlined. Clarified consequences of continued breach of appropriate behaviour. After 3 warnings: Loss of playtime – 5 mins starting point. Deprived of privileges. Sent to another Class. Write down or ask what has been done and what could be done better. Ask child “What can you do to resolve the situation?” e.g. written apology Use Behaviour Incident Report form. In case of a dispute between students, listening to both sides of the conflict is important and this may involve addressing the situation during break time so as not to disrupt the class. Note the discrepancy and inform the students that it will be addressed later.	Bring parents in early while a situation is still minor. Persistent behaviour at any level should be reported to parents. Consult with College or other colleagues for feedback in handling certain situations if support is needed. A specialist or casual teacher should notify class teacher depending on the severity of the infringement. NB: This will help to identify those children who need support before situations escalate. A child study may be carried out at a pedagogical level at the indication of the class teacher.
2	Infringes the rules and rights of others or displays	At this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again	Duty/Specialist teacher discusses with class teacher behaviour of child.

	behaviours at a higher frequency or intensity than level 1. e.g. Teasing Talking back Throwing things Rudeness Disrespect of others in class Disrespect of teacher or other staff member Not following instruction or class rules Distracting or disrupting other class members	the responsible, respectful way to behave in class. Options: Loss of privileges. Automatic "time-out" and where applicable, complete "Unacceptable Behaviour Report Form" (see attached). Length of time out determined according to behaviour and age of student. e.g. Age of child times minutes + consideration for level of behaviour Copy of Report form given to Class Teacher (if not observer). Copy of Report form to be given to the Principal. Parents to be informed. In the case of rudeness to staff or another class member there will be a written apology as well as "time out" and the child will most likely go on a Behaviour Plan with parents informed.	Class teachers to work with children "What's the Problem?" (older children can discuss or write about the problem, younger children can draw a picture; collect and kept in student files). Completion of 3 'Unacceptable Behaviour Report forms', warrants a suspension. A report is to be made by the class teacher and copies given to Parent/s and to College to be filed. A Child Study may occur at pedagogical meeting. If behaviour is continuous the child will go on a Behaviour Plan
2a : If three parent/teacher interviews regarding the same type of behaviour have occurred and no resolution found then consideration should be given to the adoption of the Behaviour Plan.			
3	Seriously and regularly breaches the rights of others or displays behaviour at a higher intensity or behaviour is continuous e.g. Verbal or physical assault Intimidation. Swearing Defiance Isolated serious breaking of rules Damaging property Disrupting class members to a level where their learning is effected Continued Disobedience Acting in a way that threatens the good order of the school or the safety or wellbeing of another	As above, at this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again the responsible, respectful way to behave towards others. Child/ren automatically lose playtime (ensure appropriate break). Classroom removal Play time will be spent on time out appropriate to age & behaviour. Duty teachers to be notified. Instant suspension for verbal or physical assault or swearing. Behaviour plan to be devised by Class Teacher, College member, Parent and Child (see Behaviour Plan)	10 minute weekly 'touch base' meeting with a College member and the Principal (for term) The parent will need to commit to specialist support for child outside of school, by relevant nominated professional.
4	Seriously and continually violates		Meeting called between Class Teacher, Principal, Parent and

	other's rights Violent behaviour, verbal or physical assault. Swearing. Disrupting class to a level where learning is regularly effected. Vandalism. Showing insufficient signs of change despite all efforts at seeking a resolution of the inappropriate behaviour as outlined in the behaviour management policy. Continued Disobedience	Fifth report may result in Immediate suspension for three days. Exclusion from particular class or activity may also be considered. Sixth report will result in Suspension for five days See suspension procedures	Child. Parents must seek outside support eg Counsellor, Therapists Anthroposophical Doctor. Student can also be referred to 'Child and Adolescent Team' – Katoomba Hospital
5	In extreme circumstances expulsion will occur	See Suspension and Expulsion procedures.	

Levels of Behaviour Management Playground

Level	Student Behaviour	Teacher Action/Consequences	Extra Support
0	Student adheres to school rules. Student respects the rights of self and others, is co-operative and self-controlled.	Positively reinforce behaviour with appropriate comments and specific feedback	Involve colleagues in recognition of children's achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assemblies • positive behaviours noted
1	Involved in minor disruptions of low intensity and frequency. For example: rough play unfair play pushing out of bounds exclusion teasing put downs	The aim here is to make child/ren <i>conscious</i> of error and redirect into appropriate behaviour Active Options: Start with clarification of situation, include all students involved. Use warning or reminder – 3 only expression of disapproval or disappointment. clarify rights/rules about safety, respect and care consequences of behaviour outlined. clarify consequences of continued breach of appropriate behaviour loss of playtime – 5 mins starting point write down or discuss what has been done and what could be done better ask child "What can you do to resolve the situation?" e.g. verbal or written apology	Bring parents in early while a situation is still minor. Persistent behaviour at any level should be reported to parents. Consult with Principal in handling certain situations if support is needed. Duty, specialist or casual teacher should notify class teacher depending on the severity of the infringement. NB: This will help to identify those children who need support before situations escalate.
2	Infringes the rules and rights of others or displays behaviours at a higher frequency or intensity than level 1 e.g. teasing, exclusion, cliques, continual fighting, throwing sticks, stones, verbal abuse, rudeness, rudeness to teachers and staff,	At this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again the responsible, respectful way to behave in the playground Options: Automatic "time-out" and where applicable, complete "Unacceptable Behaviour Report Form" (see attached). Length of time out determined according to behaviour and age of student. e.g. Age of child times minutes + consideration for level of behaviour	Duty/Specialist teacher discusses with class teacher behaviour of child Class teachers to work with children "What's the Problem?" (older children can discuss or write about the problem, younger children can draw a picture, collected and kept in student files) Completion of 3 report forms, warrants a letter to parents requesting a meeting with class teacher, parents and child.

	swearing damaging property	<p>Copy of Report form given to Class Teacher (if not observer).</p> <p>Copy of Report form to be given to College.</p> <p>Parents to be informed.</p> <p>In the case of rudeness to staff or another class member there will be a written apology as well as "time out".</p> <p>In case of damaging property, student may be asked to provide restitution through a job plan (also see fee policy).</p>	<p>At this point the child will be suspended.</p> <p>From this meeting agreements are made regarding future conduct and consequences.</p> <p>A report is made by the class teacher and copies given to Parent and to College to file.</p> <p>A Child Study may occur at pedagogical meeting.</p> <p>The parent will be given a mandate in which they will need to seek outside support.</p>
2a If three parent/teacher interviews regarding the same behaviour have occurred and no resolution found then consideration should be given to the adoption of the Behaviour Plan.			
3	<p>Seriously and regularly breaches the rights of others or displays behaviour at a higher intensity than level 2. e.g.</p> <p>lower level verbal or physical attack, kicking and hitting, intimidation, intentionally disrupting other children's play, defiance, swearing, throwing sticks and stones at people, isolated serious breaking of rules</p> <p>vandalism</p> <p>acts in a way that otherwise threatens the good order of the school or the safety or wellbeing of others</p>	<p>As above, at this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again the responsible, respectful way to behave towards others.</p> <p>Child/ren automatically lose playtime, sit with duty teacher. Parents notified may be asked to collect child immediately</p> <p>Play time will be spent on time out (as long as there has been a break – food, toilet etc). Duty teachers to be notified. Fourth report to be filled out and filed.</p> <p>Principal will decide on suspension.</p> <p>Behaviour plan to be devised by Principal, Class Teacher, College member, Parent and Child (see Behaviour Plan Appendix)</p>	<p>10 minute weekly 'touch base' meeting with a College member and Principal (for term)</p> <p>The parent will need to commit to specialist support for child outside of school, by relevant nominated professional by the school.</p>
4	<p>Seriously and continually violates other's rights</p> <p>Violent behaviour, verbal or physical (see Violent & Aggressive behaviour policy).</p> <p>Showing insufficient signs of change despite all efforts at seeking a resolution of the</p>	<p>Fifth report may result in</p> <p>Immediate suspension for three days. Exclusion from particular class or activity may also be considered.</p> <p>Sixth report may result in</p> <p>Suspension for five days</p> <p>See suspension procedures.</p>	<p>Meeting called between Class Teacher, Principal, Parent and Child.</p> <p>Parents must seek outside support by Professionals nominated by the school.</p> <p>Student can also be referred to 'Child and Adolescent</p>

	inappropriate behaviour as outlined in the behaviour management policy		Team' – Katoomba hospital
5	In extreme circumstances expulsion will occur	See Suspension and Expulsion procedures.	

Kindergarten Behaviour Policy Guidelines

In the Kindergarten, most behavioural difficulties will be worked within the classroom. The Steiner Kindergarten teacher works mostly with a creative approach to discipline. The main tool is a very strong rhythm and an imaginative approach to introducing any change throughout the day, eg all transition periods are carried by verses and songs.

Another tool to resolve behavioural difficulties is to bring a strong message through a story told by the teacher for a whole week.

If difficulties persist after taking these approaches, the following steps will be in place:

Note: These procedures are attachments to the Behaviour Management Policy developed by the College of Teachers.

The young child lives in the present and doesn't understand consequences.

One needs to respond to a disruptive action immediately in a clear and simple way. Explanations and justification often create confusion in the child and place undue burden on them, entering them into the adult world of responsibility before their time. If a child hurts someone else, he/she should be encouraged to care for that person.

How Kindergarten Teachers respond to an unacceptable behaviour or action.

1. Redirect the child's energy e.g. encourage the child to play with someone else, give a job (sweeping).
2. Keep the child with them.
3. Remove the child from the playground or room for a certain time (with supervision).
4. If behaviour continues, meet with and speak to parents.

STEP 1

Bring child close to the teacher to ensure other children are safe.

STEP 2

Find more appropriate tasks for the child

STEP 3

Inform parents – arrange a meeting to discuss further approach

STEP 4

In rare cases, it might be necessary to send a child home, eg if other children are endangered.

Teacher will discuss difficulties in pedagogical meetings to seek support. In some cases, the support of Extra Lesson might be beneficial or the referral to other Specialists outside of the School.

Behaviour Intervention Plan (BIP)

Student Name: _____ School: Blue Mountains Steiner School Grade: _____ Date: _____

A. Behavior(s) of Concern: 1. _____
2. _____

B. Baseline Data/FBA Results/Observation Info/Office Referral/Etc.: _____

Baseline data indicates _____

C. Goal(s) (Stated Positively):
1. _____
2. _____

D. Intervention Plan/Strategies for success:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

E. Reinforcement/Consequences:
I. What happens when desired behaviors are demonstrated?
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

II. What happens when undesired behaviours are demonstrated?
1. _____

2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

F. Data Collection System:

1. Teacher records / accounts / scatter plot. _____
2. _____

G. Other Pertinent Information: _____

H. Contributing Team Members:

_____	(Principal)	_____
_____	(class teacher)	_____
_____	(student-welfare)	_____

I. Review Date: _____

Behaviour Plan

What is a Behaviour Plan? A Behaviour Plan is a plan of action that is drawn up to assist a child who is experiencing difficulty with their behaviour.

The purpose of a Behaviour Plan is to empower a child rather than punish the child.

A Behaviour Plan is made after a child has reached level three of the “LEVELS OF BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT” table.

A Behaviour Plan is drawn up in consultation with Class Teacher, College member, Parents and child and support person at parent discretion.

It is the Class Teacher’s responsibility to ensure all relevant staff are informed when a care plan is in place.

A Care Plan will consist of:

- date of meeting
- who was present at the meeting
- behaviours needing change
- strategies for changing those behaviours
- date of next meeting
- duration of the plan
- names of teachers to be in weekly meetings
- outside agency support if sought

A behaviour plan may turn a child around or it may not.

If a behaviour plan is not successful then further strategies (counselling and other outside assistance) should be used.

Regular parent interviews are essential.

If, after all the above are implemented and there is little change, then suspension and possible expulsion may occur.

Procedures concerning Suspension, Expulsion and Exclusion of Students

Definitions *Registered and Accredited Individual Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual, 3.7.1*

Suspension: temporary removal of a student from all of the classes that a student would normally attend at a school for a set period of time

Expulsion: permanent removal of a student from one particular school

Exclusion: the act of preventing admission to a number of schools.

In extreme circumstances, the principal of a school may make a submission to an appropriate authority, or to other schools, recommending the permanent exclusion of a student from the registration system of which the school is a member, or from other schools.

The definition of exclusion above is different to the usual meaning of exclusion in our school context – meaning being excluded from a particular class or activity which may be the result of behaviour, duty of care, WHS or a parent/guardian being unwilling to pay for an activity, for example.

As a Steiner school we are part of an association rather than a system and therefore the Non-government Schools (NSW) Manual's definition of exclusion is not applicable, as we do not apply this form of exclusion to students. It is important to note however, that for a student with a history of violent behaviour, we would supply information on receipt of a request from another school's principal or proprietor in regards to that student's behaviour.

General Principles

The Blue Mountains Steiner School makes every effort to ensure that education is a rewarding and relevant experience for all students.

The School promotes good discipline in order to ensure effective learning.

It is essential that suspension, expulsion or exclusion are strategies to be used only in extreme cases of misbehaviour and that any suspension, expulsion or exclusion of a student is at the conclusion of a process of steps including 'procedural fairness'.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that the students, parents and staff are fully aware of these procedures.

The Class Teacher is to seek early and positive support from parents or caregivers in resolving discipline and behaviour problems.

A student who is extremely insolent, persistently disobedient, and disruptive or continually harasses other students or staff may be suspended from school. Suspension provides a period when all parties can seek a positive resolution to the problem. For younger children our school may be call this a "send home".

Note that it is important to consider individual circumstances and in some cases being excluded from particular activities or the students own class may be more effective. The aim should be to educate the child so as to prevent the behaviour from reoccurring and jeopardising the safety of others.

Violent behaviour must be dealt with swiftly and may result in immediate suspension or 'send home'. Staff must still ensure that there has been a process of 'procedural fairness'. A student may need to be removed from other students within the school while a non-biased procedurally fair process is conducted, prior to any of the three defined actions above.

Parents are to be formally notified, in writing, of the serious breach to the school rules or discipline code that has resulted in suspension or consequences at this level. A meeting will

take place. The Class Teacher, Parent(s) and child to formalise a Behavioral Plan to support the child's return to school. 'Send home' may also be part of a Behaviour Plan for a student who has specific difficulties where an agreed longer term support plan is in place that involves support both internally and externally to the School.

Detailed records (Unacceptable Behaviour Form/ Behaviour Plan) must be created and maintained in relation to any serious student misbehaviour particularly where that misbehaviour may lead to suspension, expulsion or exclusion.

Any action by a student that could constitute a criminal offence must be reported to the police.

The Principal will ratify any suspension decisions. The Principal and two Board members are needed to ratify expulsion or exclusion.

Procedures

Urgent circumstances

In circumstances where violence has occurred, or where for some reason the safety of students or staff is considered to be at risk, the College may immediately suspend the student, following steps for 'procedural fairness and pending determination of the appropriate action to be followed. (see, Violent or Aggressive Behaviour Policy and Procedures and this Behaviour Management Policy Levels).

If a student's behaviour is threatening to other students or staff, the Principal or College may call the police.

Non-urgent circumstances

Except in the case of immediate suspension in extreme circumstances, before suspension is considered the Principal should:

1. ensure that all appropriate school student welfare strategies and discipline options have been applied and documented and that personnel that may contribute to student welfare have been involved (see Student Welfare Communication Policy);
2. discuss with the student and parents or caregiver the unacceptable behaviour, consequences and clear expectations of what is required; (this may include a Behaviour Intervention Plan);
3. Follow steps for 'procedural fairness';
4. record action taken.

Suspension Procedures (see Levels Behaviour Management Plan)

In cases of suspension - both short and long - the Class Teacher and Principal should:

1. Give the student the opportunity to express his or her view of the incident(s). This view must be taken into account before a decision is made to suspend, (see steps for procedural fairness).
2. Inform the student of the precise grounds upon which suspension is being considered.
3. Notify the parents or caregiver in writing of:
 - the suspension;
 - the date and duration of the suspension;
 - the reasons for the suspension;
 - the expectation that the student will continue with studies at home and what these should be;
 - the expectation that the student will be looked after in their absence from school;
 - the importance of their assistance in resolving the matter;

- the need to involve outside support eg counsellor, Doctor, therapist.
 - their responsibility for the care and safety of the student while under suspension
 - includes the opportunity to request a review of the decision
 - any intention to proceed to expulsion;
4. Convene a meeting of the Principal and College, Class teacher, Parents and child to discuss appropriate action in the interests of the student and of the school, before re-entry.
 5. Conditions for re-entry into the school are clearly stated.
 6. Follow up interviews with parents and student should occur within a month.
 7. Record action taken.

Long suspension - five days

1. If a short suspension has not resolved the problem or the behaviour is so serious as to warrant a long suspension, the Principal will advise the School Council or Council Chair.
2. The Principal will ensure that all relevant documentation is retained on file at the school, for review by the Leadership Team and College who will make recommendations for further action. This also must include a record of a process of 'procedural fairness'.
3. The Class Teacher and/or College member will offer to develop, with the student and parents or caregiver, an agreed study program to be undertaken by the student during the period of suspension.
4. No more than two long suspensions will be imposed on an individual student in any one calendar year without the approval of the College, Principal and School Council.
5. If after two long suspensions the matter has not been resolved, alternative strategies must be considered, including alternative educational programs or expulsion.

Expulsion Procedure

1. In extreme circumstances the Principal, College and School Council may recommend expulsion. In these cases the student will be immediately suspended pending their decision.
2. Expulsion may be recommended following violent behaviour or the bringing of weapons or drugs to school, irrespective of any police action taken or continued cases of serious misbehaviour. (see Level 5 Behaviour Management Policy)
3. The College will consider the responses given by the parents/care giver and student prior to a final decision. Again a process of 'procedural fairness' must be in evidence.
4. Final decision of expulsion lies with the Principal, College of Teachers, and representatives of School Council.
5. Notification of expulsion shall be given via hand delivered letter and follow up phone call on the same day.
6. A follow up interview will be offered to parents/student.

DRUGS

Possession of or use by students of any illegal drugs at any time at Blue Mountains Steiner School, on school excursions, at functions, or en-route to and from school may result in immediate suspension and may be taken as grounds for possible expulsion.

- a) Possession of or use by students of alcohol or tobacco at any time at Blue Mountains Steiner School on school excursions, at functions, or en-route to and from school may lead to immediate suspension with a view to expulsion.
- b) Students who are on prescribed medication must follow the Prescribed Medications Policy. The School will query any medication in possession of or used by students who do not have a medical agreement form at any time on school excursions, at functions, or en-route to and from school.

Parents Request a Review of Suspension or Expulsion

- Parents make written application for a review to the Principal and submit any information they want to be considered during the review process.
- The Principal considers the information provided by the parents and reviews the decision.
- The Principal may seek advice from the College Chair, student welfare officer, School Council or AIS.
- The Principal either confirms the preliminary decision as final decision or amends the preliminary decision as final decision based on the additional information provided.
- Principal notifies the parents of the outcome of the review.
- If the Principal decides suspension or expulsion is not warranted, the process ends here.
- If the Principal decides a suspension or expulsion is warranted, the steps for suspension or expulsion are to be followed.

If the Student is Expelled from School

1. The Principal notifies the class teacher and College chairperson.
2. The student and their parents are offered information about alternatives for continuing their education after the expulsion.
3. The student is given the opportunity to pick up any personal belongings from the school and return any resources/ school property.
4. Administration staff, process the termination of enrolment.
5. All fees and charges become immediately payable, a final statement is sent to parents.
6. A record of the expulsion is placed on the student's file.
7. This process ends.



Blue Mountains Steiner School Student Incident Report Form

Student's Name _____ Class _____

Teacher _____

Date _____ Location _____

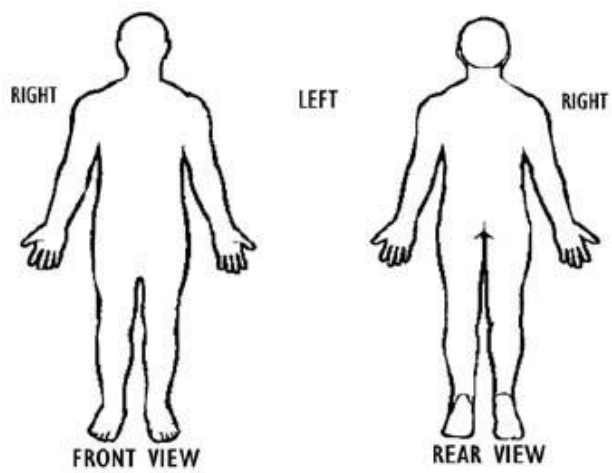
Behaviour	Tick	Frequency	Behaviour	Tick	Frequency
Using Inappropriate Language			Inappropriate bus behaviour		
Throwing Items / Unsafe Behaviour			Inappropriate gestures		
Disrupting with noises			Using physical aggression / rough play		
Moving out of an assigned area			Talking without permission		
Teasing Classmates			Disturbing another students work		
Inappropriate attention seeking behaviours / social skills			Refusing to work / Refusing to follow directions		
Causing injury to another student			Answering back / disrespect		
Destroying property			Other		

Supporting Details

Actions Taken

Outcomes _____

Notes _____

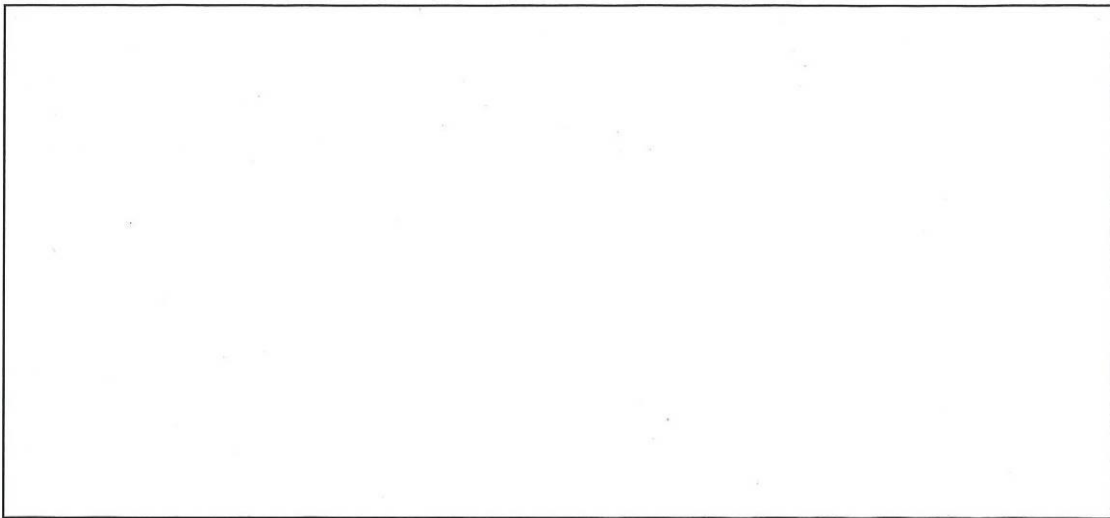
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(B1) STAGE 1 **Reflection for Student Who HAS BEEN Harmed**

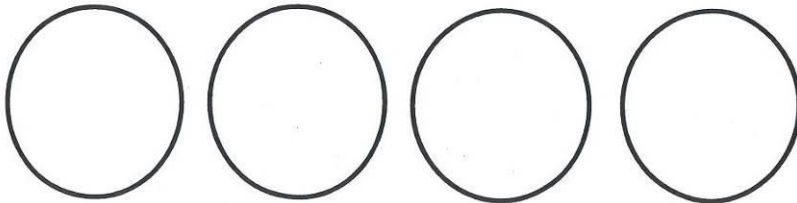
STUDENT: _____ CLASS: _____
TEACHER: _____ DATE: _____
TIME: _____ PLACE: _____

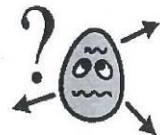
Student's summary

1. Draw or write about what you know happened.

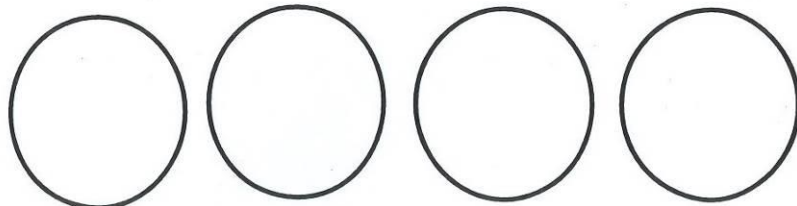


2. How have you and others been hurt?





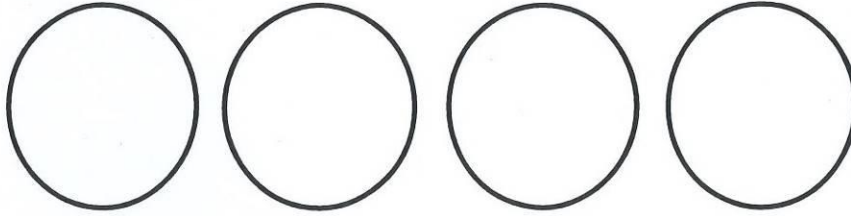
3. What has been the saddest thing for you?





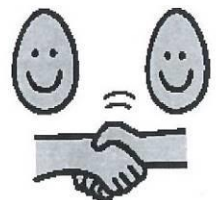
B2 Reflection for Student Who HAS BEEN Harmed

4. Who has been sad or upset because of has happened?



5. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

6. What have you learned from what has happened?



COMPLETED BY TEACHER

- ☐ Offender has admitted offence
- ☐ Necessary people have been contacted - e.g. parent, class teacher, principal.
- ☐ All involved have had an opportunity to speak about the incident.

What evidence is there that the person who was harmed has been heard?

Describe the learning that has been brought about through the repairing of the harm caused.

A1

STAGES 2 & 3

Student Report on Serious Incident

Reflection Sheet for Student Who Has CAUSED Harm

STUDENT: _____ CLASS: _____
TEACHER: _____ DATE: _____
TIME: _____

PLACE: ☐ Classroom ☐ Playground ☐ Excursion ☐ Other

1. What happened?

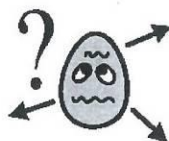
2. What were you thinking at the time?

3. What have you thought about since?

4. Who has been affected by what you have done?

5. What do you need to do to make things right?

Student signature _____



A2

Reflection for Student Who Has CAUSED Harm

STAGES 2 & 3

Teacher's summary

Please identify the unsafe and/or disrespectful behaviour shown by the student.

INCIDENT

- ☐ Hitting, roughing, physical abuse
- ☐ Throwing objects
- ☐ Defiance of authority
- ☐ Abusive language
- ☐ Continuous disruptive behaviour
- ☐ Damaging or stealing property
- ☐ Behaviour injurious to the self esteem of others
- ☐ Other -

Summary of Intervention: _____

Action - agreed consequence/repair of harm: _____

Notifications As required

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordinator | |

Closure/Student Follow-up

Has consequence/repair of harm taken place?

Yes ☐ Date: _____ No ☐ Action _____

What have you learned?

What behaviour do you need to practice?



B1

STAGE 2 & 3

Student Report on Serious Incident

Reflection Sheet for Student Who HAS Been Harmed

STUDENT: _____ CLASS: _____

TEACHER: _____ DATE: _____

TIME: _____

PLACE: ☐ Classroom ☐ Playground ☐ Excursion ☐ Other

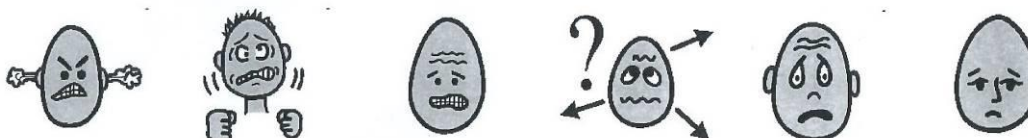
1. What did you think when you realised what had happened?

2. What impact has this incident had on you and others?

3. What has been the hardest thing for you?

4. What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Student signature _____



B2

Reflection for Student Who HAS Been Harmed

STAGES 2 & 3

Teacher's summary

Please identify the unsafe and/or disrespectful behaviour shown by the student.

Summary of Intervention:

Action - agreed consequence/repair of harm:

Notifications As required

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assistant principal | <input type="checkbox"/> Principal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Class teacher | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Co-ordinator | |

Closure/Student Follow-up

Has consequence/repair of harm taken place?

Yes ☐ Date: _____ No ☐ Action _____

What have you learned?



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

This policy outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school. It reflects the [Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy](#) of the New South Wales Department of Education.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we reject all forms of bullying. No one should experience bullying within the learning and working environments of our school.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Blue Mountains Steiner School has an inclusive environment where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. Quality education is provided for students to meet their learning needs in a secure, ordered and supportive school environment. The focus of quality education is for students to learn and grow with confidence. Any inappropriate behaviour that interferes with teaching and learning at the school and/or the wellbeing of students cannot be accepted, including cyber bullying. Any such behaviour is unacceptable and needs to be managed and attract appropriate consequences.

Students, teachers, parents, carers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe, respectful and resilient environment, free from all forms of bullying. Teachers, parents, carers and other adult members of our community have a responsibility to model positive behaviour for all students in our community. Such modeling involves positive interactions on a daily basis, as well as appropriate reactions if bullying occurs. This policy may apply outside of school hours and off school premises, where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. This includes any online interactions.

Students, teachers, parents, carers and members of the wider school community can expect:

- ☐ that students will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation
- ☐ to be involved in the collaborative development of the school Anti-Bullying policy
- ☐ to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Anti-Bullying policy
- ☐ that all students will be provided with appropriate support if bullying occurs

Students, teachers, parents, carers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to:

- ☐ promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- ☐ actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour if and when they occur
- ☐ contribute to the development of this Anti-Bullying policy and support it through words and actions

PROTECTION

The Department of Education defines bullying as **repeated** verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to such behaviour carried out through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment, including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- ☐ **Verbal** (e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats)
- ☐ **Physical** (e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- ☐ **Social** (e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures)
- **Psychological** (e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions)
- **Cyber** (e.g. malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones, hacking of online accounts, social media/blogging comments and posts).

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Every member of the school community has a specific role in preventing and dealing with bullying.

Students can expect to:

- know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff
- be provided with appropriate support (both the subject of and those responsible for the behaviour)
- take part in learning and social experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment. These experiences will be guided by the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabus, Values Education and other Key learning Areas.

Students have a responsibility to:

- advise teachers of any bullying or teasing
- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- follow the school Anti-Bullying policy
- behave as responsible bystanders
- behave as responsible citizens
- be respectful of others
- respond to incidents of bullying according to the Anti-Bullying policy.

Parents and carers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible and safe online behaviour
- model appropriate pro-social behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-Bullying policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive and appropriate responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-Bullying policy
- report all incidents of school-related bullying behaviour to the school. Parents should not approach other students or parents/carers to attempt to resolve the issue themselves
- work collaboratively with key stakeholders of the school, for example, school executive, parents/carers, students, to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Schools have a responsibility to:

- develop an Anti-Bullying policy through consultation with parents, carers, students and the community which clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for managing bullying in the classroom and playground (following the guidelines established by the Department of Education)
- inform students, parents, carers and the community about the school's Discipline policy, school rules, expectations and the Anti-Bullying policy
- provide students and parents/carers with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities of bystanders or observers
- provide parents, carers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate

behaviour

- communicate to parents and caregivers that they have an important role to play in resolving incidents of bullying behaviour involving their children
- follow up complaints of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimization in a timely manner, and facilitate the resolution of all incidents of reported bullying.

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning
- model appropriate pro-social behaviour
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying, according to the Anti-Bullying policy
- implement a common language related to the Blue Mountains Steiner School expectations by promoting and acknowledging respectful, resilient, responsible and safe behaviours and encouraging students to become active learners
- work collaboratively to ensure bullying behaviour is eliminated from the Banksmeadow Public School culture

Managing Bullying

One-off incidents of inappropriate behaviour should be addressed by the class or playground teachers as they arise. These issues should be dealt with using strategies outlined in the school Discipline Policy. If the inappropriate behaviours are repeated, whether they are verbal, physical, social or psychological, then other strategies should come into action.

All students are consistently reminded that they have the right to come to school and feel happy and confident in their learning and play, free from bullying and harassment. No member of the school community has the right to make another person feel worried or uncomfortable. If someone is making a student or community member feel like this, then they must tell someone about it. Bullying only flourishes in a culture of silence or not telling. Telling someone about bullying behaviour is not "dobbing". It is merely asserting the right to feel safe and happy while at school, and while coming and going to school.

Strategies When a Bullying Incident is Observed or Reported

- The incident is initially investigated by the teacher to whom it has been reported
- The teacher determines whether or not the incident is bullying, according to the agreed definition
- If it is not bullying the incident is dealt with by the teacher
- If it is bullying the incident is dealt with by the teacher or assistant principal using the following strategies:
 - Interview with the victim, bullies and witnesses using Restorative Practices. For the bully, this is a non-adversarial interview designed to emphasise the concern of the person who is being hurt or elicit some empathy, and to come to some agreement as to what the person might do to help the victim. For the victim, this is done in a supportive manner and the aim is to explore ways in which the victim can behave to minimise the chances of the bullying being repeated. This may involve the victim being shown assertive behaviour, or reducing behaviour that may be provoking the bullies. During the meeting the teacher remains calm, empathetic, never angry or indignant and respect is shown for each person
 - All information will be documented on the school student welfare report framework.
 - Consequences, as outlined in the school Discipline Policy, may occur depending on the circumstances
 - The Principal will be informed of all incidents of bullying, including the

- consequences and actions taken
- Both victim and bully will be offered counselling if deemed necessary
- It is essential that daily follow-up takes place with bullies and victims. This involves asking the bullies individually how they have followed through what they agreed to do to help the victim, asking the victim how they are progressing and whether or not there have been any further incidents. The follow-up is initially carried out daily, and then tapered off if all is going well.
- If the bullying behaviour does not stop as a result of this intervention, then other sanctions will be implemented as part of the Discipline Policy. There will be a need to keep working with the victim at this time to support them. This may have to be carried out by a member of the executive, depending on when the bullying incidents come to light
- Communicate with parents/carers (both victim's and bully's) the details of the incident, how it has been dealt with and how it will be followed up. Ask for support from the parents/carers to help develop behaviours and attitudes in their children that are consistent with the Anti-Bullying policy.

PREVENTION

- **Strategies to prevent bullying**
- Maintaining a positive school culture that acknowledges that bullying is not tolerated within the school community
- Provision of programs that promote resilience, for example, life skills and social skills, conflict resolution and communication skills, Positive Behaviour for Learning framework, Life Education, Bigger Than a Bully, Bullying – No Way, Child Protection, Friendly Schools Plus, Bounce Back, Circle Time, Peer Support and Harmony Day initiatives
- Consistent focus on school behaviour expectations and understanding of acceptable behaviour
- Professional development for staff related to bullying and strategies to counteract it
- Build community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response (newsletters, assemblies, parent/carer information sessions)
- Maintain staff commitment to acknowledge victims of bullying and deal with bullying incidents
- Ongoing gathering and recording of data.

Advice to students who are being bullied

- Ignore or walk away
- Look directly into the eyes of the person attempting to bully you, speak firmly and say, "Stop that, I don't like it"
- Go directly to a teacher or staff member and report the incident if the attempts to stop the bullying behaviour do not work
- Other protective strategies, such as stay away from the bully or places where bullying occurs, and be with supportive friends
- Do not share private information like passwords, name and address, phone numbers with anyone. This can include sharing photos of yourself, friends and family.

Advice to students who know someone else is being bullied

- Students should be made aware that witnesses to bullying have a very powerful role to play and early intervention can defuse situations before bullying gets out of hand.
- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop
- Refuse to join in with the bully
- Support students who are being bullied – just standing by them can help prevent bullying
- Tell an adult if you are concerned about bullying

- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to them or to someone else.

Incidents of Cyberbullying

- If students are being harassed online they are encouraged to take the following actions immediately:
 - Tell a trusted adult – teacher, parent/carer, older sibling, grandparent
 - Log out and stop messaging if you feel you are being harassed
 - Block user messages if being harassed through email, social media or instant messaging
 - Never respond or reply to harassing messages
 - Keep a record of calls, messages, posts or emails that may be hurtful or harmful
 - Report instances of cyberbullying to your teacher and show them screen shots of the bullying, if the allegation involves another member of the school
 - Click the 'Report Concern' button if the site you are on has one
 - Advise your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or phone company. Most service providers have appropriate use policies that restrict users from harassing others. They can respond to reports of harassment over their networks or help track down the appropriate agency to report to
- Report incidents to police if bullying includes physical threats. Some people believe they can get away with serious threats because it is anonymous. They are wrong. Most can be traced and it is a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any form of communication to menace, harass or offend another person.

Early Intervention

- Students to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents and reiterate that reporting is not "dobbing"
- Parents/carers encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem
- Students recognised for positive behaviours
- Teachers use class or playground management plans if an incident of bullying occur
- Executive staff made aware of incidents of bullying.
- Bullying incidents are recorded on the welfare framework, in the playground folder or in staff's own records
- Regular discussions, informal and formal, including role plays of how to respond to the situation if it were to occur again

Those students who are at risk or identified as being ongoing victims of bullying type behaviour will be encouraged to report directly and immediately to a member of staff if they feel either bullied or intimidated. Early intervention arrangements for students at risk will be communicated to all staff.

RESPONSE

Incidents of bullying can be reported immediately to any staff member by students and/or their parent/carer. Any incident of bullying will be investigated and recorded as outlined in this policy. Consequences for inappropriate behaviour will be managed by the class teacher, assistant principal or principal. Individual cases will be dealt with according to the individual circumstances. Feedback and meetings will be held, where required, with all those involved.

The school will manage serious incidents as per Department of Education policies, including:

- Student Discipline in Government Schools
- [Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Procedures](#)
- Wellbeing Framework for Schools

- [Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy](#)
- Bullying Among Young Children: A guide for parents (PDF)
- Anti-Bullying – how to encourage your child to be an effective bystander
- [Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines](#)

Our school community will be empowered, through a variety of strategies, to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation, and behave as responsible bystanders. These may include:

- Parent/carer forums
- Information evenings
- Parent/carer - teacher interviews
- School website
- School newsletter

Incidents of bullying will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Student wellbeing programs will be evaluated and reported on annually. The Anti-Bullying policy will be formally reviewed every two years.

Additional Information

Additional information, resources and support relating to effective anti-bullying strategies can be found at:

- Kids Help Line <http://www.kidshelp.com.au> 1800 55 1800
- Bullying. No Way! www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Reach Out! www.reachout.com.au
- Police Youth Liaison Officer, Springwood Police 0247510299

ANTI-RACISM POLICY

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Blue Mountains Steiner School is committed to the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination. This policy applies to all students and staff, and has implications for members of our community and visitors to our school.

POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 The Blue Mountains Steiner School rejects all forms of racism - including direct and indirect racism, racial vilification and harassment – in all aspects of the school.
- 1.2 No student, employee, parent, caregiver, community member or visitor should experience racism within the learning or working environment.
- 1.3 The Blue Mountains Steiner School shares the responsibility with other members of our community, to eradicate expressions of racism in learning and working environments, and challenges the attitudes that allow them to emerge.
- 1.4 All teaching and non-teaching staff contribute to the eradication of racism by promoting acceptance of Australia's cultural, linguistic and religious diversity, challenging prejudiced attitudes and ensuring that sanctions are applied against racist and discriminatory behaviours.
- 1.5 The Blue Mountains Steiner School has a trained Anti-Racism Contact Officer to provide timely and professional responses to complaints regarding racism.

CONTEXT (as per the DoE Anti-Racism Policy)

3.1 The *NSW Anti-Discrimination Act (1977)* along with the *Commonwealth Racial Discrimination Act (1975)* make racial discrimination and vilification illegal in New South Wales. These Acts provide the legislative context and foundation for the Anti-Racism Policy of the department.

3.2 The *Multicultural NSW Act (2000)*, the *NSW Government Plan for Aboriginal affairs, education, employment and accountability: OCHRE (2013)*, the *National Framework For Values Education In Australian Schools (2005)* as well as the *Department's Aboriginal Education and Training Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Multicultural Education Policy, Student Welfare Policy and the Values in NSW Public Schools Policy* provide related requirements that complement the implementation of this policy.

3.3 The *Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines* establish the standard approach to resolving complaints about racism that must be used in all learning and working environments.

RESPONSIBILITIES & DELEGATIONS

4.1 Principals are responsible for examining school practices and procedures to ensure they are consistent with the policy; nominating an Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) and ensuring they are trained; and including anti-racism education strategies in their school plans.

4.2 All staff are responsible for monitoring their own behaviour to ensure that it does not result in anyone experiencing racism.

4.3 All teachers are responsible for supporting students to develop an understanding of racism and discrimination and the impact on individuals and the broader community.

4.4 Class teachers/the teacher present is responsible for resolving minor complaints informally. Serious incidents will be reported to the ARCO for handling. All complaints of racism, no matter the severity, are to be reported to the ARCO for recording. These records will be stored until the student concerned reaches the age of 25 years.

4.5 The Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) will assist the complainant of a serious incident to write their complaint. The ARCO will also collect written evidence for any person who witnessed the incident. The ARCO will then assess the complaint and proceed accordingly. Counselling may be required for both parties. Consequences for any student who participates in racist behaviour will occur as per the school Discipline Policy.

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

5.1 The Blue Mountains Steiner School will report on the progress of anti-racism education strategies through the Annual Report.

5.2 The Blue Mountains Steiner School will maintain records of complaints concerning racism and their resolution in accordance with the [Complaints Handling Policy Guidelines](#).

B. Policies for Student Discipline 2019

Blue Mountains Steiner School's Policies related to student discipline reflect the school's aim to give children a clear understanding of how the school believes they should act towards themselves and to encourage and develop self-discipline.

Students are required to abide by the school's rules and to follow the directions of teachers and other people with authority delegated by the school. In a Steiner school, staff may take into account welfare issues that may contribute to a student's behaviour and consider this within a whole approach to student discipline. Where disciplinary action is required, penalties imposed vary according to the nature of the breach of discipline and a student's prior behaviour. *Corporal punishment is not permitted under any circumstances.*

All disciplinary action that may result in any sanction against the student including suspension, expulsion or exclusion provides processes based on procedural fairness.

The full texts of the school's policies for student discipline and associated procedures are available to all members of the school community through:

- The School Office (hardcopies are available from the school office)
- The policy folders kept in each classroom/school building
- e-mail (contact the school office admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au)

Full texts of the school's policies are also distributed to the school community from time to time through the fortnightly school newsletter.

C. Policies for Complaints, Grievances & Resolution 2016

Our policies for the management of grievances include a set of guidelines that support the application of procedures that deal with concerns raised by parents and/or students. This includes steps that address procedural fairness.

Policies for complaints, grievances and resolution include: 'Anti-Racism Policy', 'Equal Employment Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedures', 'Grievance Policy and Procedures: Parents', 'Student Grievance Policy' and 'Grievance Policy and Procedures: Staff'.

The 'Grievance Policy and Procedures – Parents' was last revised in 2009. The 'Student Grievance Policy', drafted in 2005 and last revised in 2009, is written to be easily accessible to primary school age students. It can be used in conjunction with the 'Grievance Policy and Procedures – Parents'. All of the above mentioned policies and procedures in place for 2012 were last revised in 2009.

The full texts of the school's policies for complaints, grievances and resolution and associated procedures are available to all members of the school community through:

- The School Office (hardcopies are available from the school office)
- The policy folders kept in each classroom/school building
- e-mail (contact the school office admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au)

Full texts of the school's policies are also distributed to the school community from time to time through the fortnightly school newsletter.

Grievance Policy and Procedures: Parents

Policy Principle	Our school community is a place where individuals should feel safe to express their points of view openly, honestly, constructively and in a spirit of co-operation and respect. At times concerns regarding educational, behavioural or school management issues may arise.
Policy Statement	We are committed to fostering a productive, equitable and harmonious relationship with parents. We aim to ensure that parents concerns and grievances are managed promptly, impartially and fairly.

Definitions

Parent

This means the person/s responsible as carer of a child that may include a guardian, foster parents etc.

What is a grievance?

A grievance is any school related problem, concern or complaint raised by a parent for resolution by the school. As well as genuine concerns, this may also include false, mischievous or vexatious claims.

What grievances are covered by this policy?

Concerns and complaints from parents about:

- Educational/child welfare issues
- School management issues

What is excluded from this policy?

This policy **DOES NOT** apply to:

- **Child protection issues** (reportable conduct, harm, abuse)
- **Discrimination**
- **Criminal matters.**

Other policies that may be relevant

Grievances of this nature must be referred to the Principal immediately and the relevant policy followed. Where the Principal is unavailable, contact should be made with the College Chair or School Council.

Student Grievance Policy
 Student Code of Behaviour & Positive Behaviour Policy
 Behaviour – ‘Our Anti - Bullying’ Policy
 Violent or Aggressive Behaviour Policy and

Raise the grievance as soon as possible after it arises.

Raise all grievances early because:

- It is easier to investigate and resolve concerns if reported early.
- It causes less disruption to parent/school relationships.
- It is less likely to escalate into a more complicated problem.

Confidentiality

Grievances will be kept as confidential as possible when applying this policy while taking into account legal obligations and responsibilities.

Communication

Communication should be open and honest, focusing on the issue and not the person. This includes listening carefully and respectfully while the other person is talking, and exercising responsibility and mutual respect: respect by staff for parents' special relationships with their children; respect by parents for staff as professionals.

If communication is not effective or respectful when following procedures, the process can be halted and resumed at a future time or the matter referred to the School Council or Principal.

Conflict of Interest

In a school community of our size and nature it is not uncommon for a conflict of interest to exist that can affect the resolution of a grievance. All conflicts of interest should be considered and declared at an early stage. Where this fails to happen Council will consider appropriate action.

Applying the Policy

There are two different procedures to be followed dependent on whether the concern is about:

- Educational/child welfare issues OR
- School management issues

Once this is decided, follow the procedure below under the appropriate heading.

It is important to take into account the exclusions to this policy noted on page 1.

Educational/Child Welfare Issues

Talk to the class teacher

Where possible the parent should make every effort to resolve the issue or concern by speaking to the child's class teacher. This should occur at the time the issue arises.

A meeting should be arranged. This can be done by leaving a message for the teacher at the school office or by approaching the teacher after school to arrange a meeting time.

Inform the Principal

If the parent has been unable to resolve the issue or concern with the child's teacher within a reasonable time they should communicate the grievance to the Principal who will take appropriate action to resolve the matter.

In the first instance, if the grievance is straight-forward, it may be raised verbally and as soon as possible.

Write it down

If the parent is not satisfied with the outcome at this point it is necessary to write down the grievance stating the outcome that is sought. A meeting with the Principal and College representative will be arranged with the parent. At this meeting, attention will be paid to the principles and statements that form the basis of this policy document ie. communication, confidentiality etc.

A support person may attend this meeting with the parent. Notes of this meeting should be taken. These notes will be read and signed by all people in attendance.

Where the grievance remains unresolved.

If the grievance remains unresolved then it will be referred to the College of Teachers by the Principal. Previous correspondence and the notes from the previous meeting will be tabled. The parent will be given the opportunity to speak to College about the grievance before it is determined. A support person may attend with the parent if requested. The parent will be informed of the outcome of the meeting within a reasonable period of time.

If the parent wishes to take further action.

If the matter remains unresolved, because the parent is not satisfied with the outcome of the action of College, the matter will be referred to the School Council by the Principal.

All documentation of the grievance will be made available to Council.

The parent will be given the opportunity to respond to the decision of College prior to a final decision being made by Council. This may be in the form of a meeting that can be attended by a support person or by providing a letter outlining the nature of the appeal and the outcome that is requested.

The parent will be informed of the outcome within a reasonable period of time.

At the discretion of the Council an independent mediator may be engaged to assist in resolving the grievance.

Student Grievance Policy

Children have a right to learn, play and work in a friendly, safe and helpful school. They have a right to be respected, treated fairly and their concerns taken seriously.

It is normal that problems happen in a school. It is helpful to talk about problems so that somebody else may be able to help.

What to do:

- **Talk to your teacher first. Most problems can be sorted out this way.**
- **If you can't talk to your teacher you can go to the office and ask to speak to the Principal. Alternatively, you can speak to the School Welfare Officer.**
- **If you need more help tell your parent/carer about the problem. They will be able to talk to the teacher or Principal.**

Other relevant policies for parents/carers to guide students:

- **Grievance Policy and Procedures Parents**
- **Behaviour – 'Our Approach to Bullying' and Anti - Policy**
- **Student Code of Behaviour and Positive Behaviour Policy**
- **Violent or Aggressive Behaviour Policy and Procedures**
- **Transport Policy**
- **Child Protection Policy and Procedures**
- **Student Welfare Communication Policy**

Grievance Policy & Procedures: Staff

Policy Principle	Our school community is a place where staff should feel safe to express their points of view openly, honestly, constructively and in a spirit of co-operation and respect. Within this workplace concerns regarding management or educational issues can arise.
Policy Statement	We are committed to fostering a productive, equitable and harmonious relationship with staff. Staff have a responsibility to act on concerns and contribute to the positive development of our school including relationships with parents, community and other staff members. We aim to ensure that staff concerns and grievances are managed promptly, impartially and fairly.

Definitions

Staff	This includes teaching staff, ancillary staff and casual and contract staff.
What is a grievance?	A grievance is any school related problem, concern or complaint involving a staff member where a resolution is required.
What grievances are covered by this policy?	Concerns and complaints related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conflict between staff• Staff issues relating to management
What is excluded?	<p>This policy does not apply to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff performance• Child protection issues• Criminal matters <p>Grievances of this nature must be referred to the Principal as soon as possible. Where the Principal is unavailable, contact should be made with the School Leadership Team</p>
Other policies that may be relevant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Staff Performance Policy and Procedures• Child Protection Policy and Procedures• Code of Professional Practice• Grievance Policy and Procedures: Parents• Student Grievance Policy• Staff appraisal documents, eg. Teaching Framework for BMSS• AIS & IEU Agreement: Settlement Procedure• EEO & Anti-discrimination Policy and Procedures

Raise the grievance as soon as possible after it arises.

Raise all grievances early because:

- It is easier to investigate and resolve concerns if reported early.
- It causes less disruption to parent/school relationships.
- It is less likely to escalate into a more complicated problem.

Confidentiality

Grievances will be kept as confidential as possible when applying this policy while taking into account legal obligations and responsibilities.

Communication

Communication should be open and honest, focusing on the issue and not the person. This includes listening carefully and respectfully while the other person is talking, and exercising responsibility and mutual respect.

If communication is not effective or respectful when following procedures, the process can be halted and resumed at a future time or the matter referred to the Principal or Leadership Team.

Conflict of Interest

In a school community of our size and nature it is not uncommon for a conflict of interest to exist that can affect the resolution of a grievance. All conflicts of interest should be considered and declared at an early stage. Where this fails to happen Council will consider appropriate action.

APPLYING THE POLICY – CONFLICT BETWEEN STAFF

Talk to the person

Where possible the staff member should make every effort to resolve any issue or concern with the other staff member in an informal way. It is important that this occurs at the time the issue arises or as soon as possible after. Any approach to another person should be done in an appropriate manner with consideration given to the time, place and manner of contact and the schools duty of care responsibilities.

Inform the Principal

If staff have been unable to resolve the issue or concern through discussion within a reasonable time they should communicate the grievance to the Principal who will take appropriate action to resolve the matter.

If the Principal determines the issue relates to work performance then **‘Applying the Policy - Staff Performance’** must be followed from this point.

If the grievance is straight-forward it may be raised verbally as soon as possible.

Write it down

If the grievance is more complex and/or the staff member is not satisfied with the outcome at this point it is necessary to write down the grievance stating the outcome that is sought.

The Principal will inform Council of the grievance and advise of any action taken to date. This will occur regardless of the staff involved (teaching or non-teaching).

If the conflict involves teaching staff, the College Chair will be informed by the Principal that a conflict exists and that the grievance policy is being followed.

Resolving the grievance

If the grievance is straight-forward, The Leadership Team may determine appropriate action to resolve the matter.

If the grievance is of a more complex nature, Council should immediately consider the range of options available as a matter of urgency and inform staff of the time frame involved. Every effort should be made for action to occur within one week.

Action may include:

- Consultation with relevant bodies

- Arranging a meeting/mediation and engaging an outside mediator or facilitator.
(see attached resource list)

Supporting staff

Conflict and the grievance process can be difficult.

It is the Council's responsibility to implement strategies to support staff and minimise disruptions to the school.

Staff are encouraged to look at self care options.

Leadership Team appointed Coordinator

The Leadership team must appoint an appropriate person to coordinate the grievance process including liaison with external agencies/individuals and staff. This will also include preparation and distribution of a meeting agenda.

Meeting/Mediation structure

Meetings will be formal with an agenda and minutes taken. The agenda and a list of attendees must be made available to those involved 48 hours prior to the meeting. Attendees may include a staff support person or representative/s appointed by Council, which must be notified to the Principal prior to the 48 hour notice period.

In all communication about the grievance, attention must be paid to the principles and statements that form the basis of this policy document i.e. Confidentiality, respectful communication, conflict of interest, code of professional conduct.

Following any meeting, minutes will be read and signed by those in attendance within one working day.

Staff involved will be informed in writing of the outcome.

The Coordinator appointed to the grievance is responsible to ensure participants involved are kept informed throughout the process.

If the grievance is unable to be resolved

It is acknowledged that some grievances may not be resolved. If the grievance has not been brought to resolution by this time Council will determine final action.

RESOURCE LIST

Association of Independent Schools	Ph: 9299 2845
Department of Industrial Relations	Ph: 131 628
SEA	Ph: 02 94112579
Independent Education Union	Ph: 9202 2600
Blue Mountains Community Resource Network (for referral to individuals contracting mediation services)	Ph: 4759 3599
Community Justice Centre (Govt. mediation service)	Ph: 4732 1933

School Management Issues

Talk to the Principal

Bring the concern to the Principal who will direct it to the appropriate person or school body.

In the first instance, if the parent has a straight-forward concern, it may be raised verbally. This should be done as soon as possible.

The Principal will inform the parent of any school policy relevant to the concern and/or any action taken.

Write it down

If the issue has not been resolved in a reasonable time the grievance should be put in writing to the School Council stating the outcome that is sought. This will be referred to Council by the Principal.

The parent will be informed of the outcome of Councils consideration within a reasonable period of time.

If the parent wishes to take further action

If the parent is not satisfied with the results of Councils consideration they should contact the Council Chairperson.

The parent will be given the opportunity to respond to the decision of Council. This may be in the form of a meeting that can be attended with a support person, or by providing a letter outlining the nature of the appeal and the outcome that is requested.

If a meeting is held, attention will be paid to the principles and statements that form the basis of this policy document ie. communication, confidentiality etc.

The parent will be informed of the outcome within a reasonable period of time.

At the discretion of the Council, an independent mediator may be engaged to assist in bringing the grievance to a resolution.

Issues Remaining Unresolved

If the above processes have not led to resolution

A joint meeting of Principal, College and Council may be called to review the grievance, all processes to date and to decide on employing any other unexplored options to find a resolution.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

PURPOSE

This policy document is provided to staff including employees, contractors and volunteers during their employment or engagement with Blue Mountains Steiner School to ensure a clear understanding of their duties and obligations under the key items of child protection legislation in NSW.

This policy outlines the key concepts and definitions under the relevant legislation including mandatory reporters, reportable conduct, and risk management. It also sets out expected standards of behaviour in relation to employees and contractors and their relationship with students.

SCOPE

The safety, protection and wellbeing of all students are of fundamental importance to Blue Mountains Steiner School. The School has a range of obligations relating to the safety, protection and welfare of students, including:

- ☐ A duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to students;
- ☐ Obligations under child protection legislation; and
- ☐ Obligations under work health and safety legislation.

The purpose of this Policy is to summarise the obligations imposed by child protection legislation on the School and on employees, contractors and volunteers, and to provide guidelines as to how Blue Mountains Steiner School will deal with certain matters.

RELATED LEGISLATION

There are three key pieces of child protection legislation in New South Wales:

- ☐ The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW) (the Care and Protection Act);
- ☐ The Ombudsman Act 1974 (NSW) (the Ombudsman Act); and
- ☐ The Child Protection (Working With Children) Act 2012 (NSW) (the WWC Act).

OBLIGATIONS TO REPORT

Blue Mountains Steiner School requires all staff to report any concern about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child or young person to the Principal or her delegate.

Blue Mountains Steiner School requires all staff to report reportable conduct of a member of staff to the Principal or her delegate.

If the allegation involves the Principal, the report should be made to the Chairperson of the School Council.

This obligation is part of the School's overall commitment to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children.

OTHER POLICIES

There are a number of other School policies that relate to child protection that all staff

need to be aware of and understand including (but not limited to):

- Code of Conduct, including the social media policy, which sets out information about the standards of behaviour expected of all employees, contractors and volunteers; and
- The Work Health and Safety Statement which summarises the obligations imposed by work health and safety legislation on the School and workers; and
- The Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policies which summarises employee obligations in relation to unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying; and
- The School's Policy on Student Bullying; and
- The Enhancing Online Safety for Children's Act 2015.

DATE OF POLICY: 1ST JANUARY 2019

REVIEW DATE

The School will review this Policy and associated documents within twelve months and reissue a further version if necessary. Any suggested improvements should be forwarded to the Operations Manager.

Complaints that form the basis of less serious allegations i.e. non-reportable conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant School policy.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. SCHOOL

Should Blue Mountains Steiner School need to respond to allegations then the procedures followed will be in accordance with all relevant legislation, and will take into account other appropriate practices and guidelines aimed at the protection of children.

The Child Protection Policy and associated procedures will be amended from time to time to take into account amendments to legislation and regulations.

2. HEADMASTER

The Principal, or her nominee, is responsible for notifying the NSW Ombudsman of all allegations of reportable conduct. The Principal or her nominee is responsible for determining whether concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people constitute risk of significant harm and, if they do, will report these to Community Services.

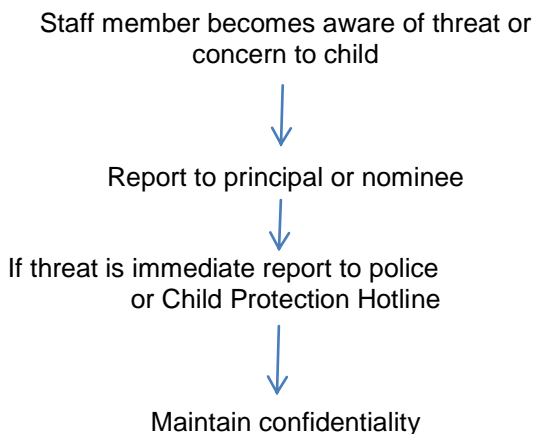
3. STAFF

As a member of staff your responsibility is to report to the Principal or to the Principals' nominee any concerns you have about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people that arise during the course of your work.

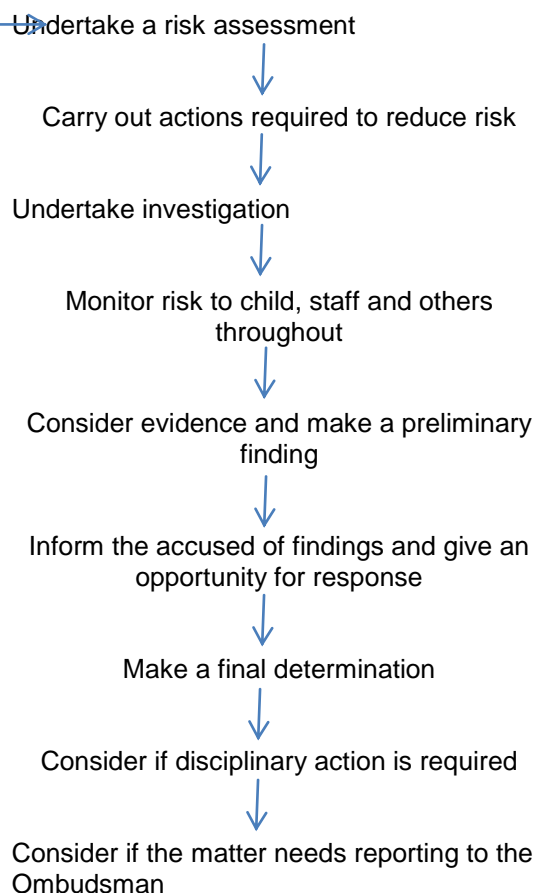
All staff must be aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm, and reportable conduct and of the procedures for doing so.

PROCEDURE:

STAFF MEMBERS



PRINCIPAL



LEGISLATION

As mentioned above for the purpose of this Policy and the various legislative requirements, the Principal or her delegate is the School's Head of Agency. An outline of the various pieces of legislation follows.

THE CARE & PROTECTION ACT

The Care and Protection Act provides for mandatory reporting of children at risk of significant harm.

Note: Any concern regarding the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a student must be reported to the Principal.

WHO IS A MANDATORY REPORTER?

Under the Care and Protection Act:

All teachers are mandatory reporters. Other School employees may also be mandatory reporters. If you are not sure whether you are a mandatory reporter you should speak to the Principal.

WHEN MUST A REPORT BE MADE TO COMMUNITY SERVICES?

WHAT IS THE THRESHOLD?

The School must, where they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child (under 16 years of age) is at risk of significant harm, complete the online Mandatory Reported Guide and report to the Principal. If necessary, contact will be made with Community Services as soon as practicable.

REASONABLE GROUNDS

'Reasonable grounds' refers to the need to have an objective basis for suspecting that a child or young person may be at risk of significant harm, based on:

- a) First hand observations of the child, young person or family;
- b) What the child, young person, parent or another person has disclosed; and
- c) What can reasonably be inferred based on professional training and / or experience

'Reasonable grounds' does not mean that the staff is required to confirm their suspicions or have clear proof before making a report.

SIGNIFICANT HARM

A child or young person is 'at risk of significant harm' if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances:

- a) The child's or young person's basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met;
- b) The parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care;
- c) In the case of a child or young person who is required to attend School in accordance with the Education Act 1990, the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive an education in accordance with that Act;
- d) The child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill- treated;
- e) The child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm;
- f) A parent or other caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm;
- g) The child was the subject of a pre-natal report under section 25 of the Care and Protection Act and the birth mother of the child did not engage successfully with support services to eliminate, or minimise to the lowest level reasonably practical, the risk factors that gave rise to the report.

DEFINITIONS

POLICY DEFINITION OF SIGNIFICANT HARM

A child or young person is at risk of significant harm if the circumstances that are causing concern for the safety, welfare or wellbeing of the child or young person are present to a significant extent.

What is meant by 'significant' in the phrase 'to a significant extent' is that which is sufficiently serious to warrant a response by a statutory authority irrespective of a family's consent.

What is significant is not minor or trivial, and may reasonably be expected to produce a substantial and demonstrably adverse impact on the child or young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing.

The significance can result from a single act or omission or an accumulation of these. Child is a person under the age of 16 years for the purposes of the Care and Protection Act.

CHILD ABUSE

There are different forms of child abuse. These include neglect, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.

Neglect is the continued failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child with the basic things needed for his or her proper growth and development, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical and dental care and adequate supervision.

Physical abuse is a non-accidental injury or pattern of injuries to a child caused by a parent, caregiver or any other person. It includes but is not limited to injuries which are caused by excessive discipline, severe beatings or shakings, cigarette burns, attempted strangulation and female genital mutilation.

Injuries include bruising, lacerations or welts, burns, fractures or dislocation of joints.

Hitting a child around the head or neck and/or using a stick, belt or other object to discipline or punish a child (in a non-trivial way) is a crime.

Serious **psychological harm** can occur where the behaviour of their parent or caregiver damages the confidence and self-esteem of the child or young person, resulting in serious emotional deprivation or trauma

Although it is possible for 'one-off' incidents to cause serious harm, in general it is the frequency, persistence and duration of the parental or carer behaviour that is instrumental in defining the consequences for the child.

This can include a range of behaviours such as excessive criticism, withholding affection, and exposure to domestic violence, intimidation or threatening behaviour.

Sexual abuse is when someone involves a child or young person in a sexual activity by using their power over them or taking advantage of their trust. Often children are bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity. Child sexual abuse is a crime.

Young person means a person who is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18 years for the purposes of the Care and Protection Act.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU CONSIDER THAT A MANDATORY REPORT IS REQUIRED?

Reporting by the School about these matters to Community Services and, where necessary, the police, is generally undertaken by the Principal or her nominee. This is in accordance with best practice principles and is the expectation of Blue Mountains Steiner School.

If you have a concern that a child or young person is at risk of significant harm you should contact the Principal or her nominee as soon as possible to discuss whether the case reaches the threshold of 'risk of significant harm' and the steps required to report the matter.

However, if there is an immediate danger to the child or young person and the Principal or next most senior member of staff is not contactable you should speak to the Police and/or the Child Protection Helpline directly and then advise the Principal or next most senior member of staff at the School as soon as possible.

- You are not required to, and must not, undertake any investigation of the matter yourself.
- You are not to inform the parents or caregivers that a report to Community Services has been made.
- You are required to deal with the matter confidentially and only disclose it to the persons referred to above or as required to comply with your mandatory reporting obligations. Failure to maintain confidentiality will not only be a breach of this policy, but could expose you to potential civil proceedings for defamation.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN THAT IS BELOW THE MANDATORY REPORTING THRESHOLD?

While the Care and Protection Act outlines a mandatory reporter's obligation to report to Community Services, as an employee of Blue Mountains Steiner School, any concern regarding the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a student must be reported to the Principal.

You are required to deal with all reports regarding the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a student with confidentiality and only disclose it to the Principal and any other person the Principal nominates. Failure to do so will be a breach of this policy.

THE OMBUDSMAN ACT

RESPONSIBILITIES

GENERAL

Part 3A of the Ombudsman Act requires heads of certain agencies, including non-government schools in NSW, to notify the New South Wales Ombudsman of all allegations of reportable conduct by an 'employee' and the outcome of the School's investigation of these allegations.

An 'employee' includes employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience participants, clergy, ministers of religion and instructors of religion who provide pastoral or liturgical services. In this part where there is a reference to an employee it includes all of these persons.

THE OMBUDSMAN

- Must keep under scrutiny the systems for preventing reportable conduct by employees of Blue Mountains Steiner School and the handling of, or response to, reportable allegations (including allegations which are exempt from notification) or convictions;
- Must receive and assess notifications from Blue Mountains Steiner School concerning reportable conduct or reportable convictions;
- Is required to oversee or monitor the conduct of investigations by Blue Mountains Steiner School into allegations of reportable or reportable convictions;
- Must determine whether an investigation that has been monitored has been conducted properly, and whether appropriate action has been taken as a result of the investigation;
- May directly investigate an allegation of reportable conduct or reportable

conviction against an employee of Blue Mountains Steiner School, or the handling of or response to such a matter (e.g. arising out of complaints by the person who is the subject of an allegation); and;

- f) May undertake their own investigations of Blue Mountains Steiner School where the Ombudsman considers it appropriate to do so, including where there is evidence of systemic failure or serious conflict of interests.

THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

The Head of School is the Principal of Blue Mountains Steiner School. Under the Ombudsman Act the Head of School must:

- a) Set up systems to ensure that they are advised of any allegations of reportable conduct against employees;
- b) Notify the Ombudsman as soon as possible and no later than thirty days after being made aware of an allegation;
- c) Notify the Ombudsman whether or not Blue Mountains Steiner School plans to take disciplinary or other action in relation to an employee who is the subject of a reportable allegation or conviction, and the reasons for taking or not taking any such action as soon as practicable; and
- d) Provide the Ombudsman with any documentary and other information as the Ombudsman may from time to time request to assist in the Ombudsman's monitoring of an investigation. This will typically include the NSW O Part B notification form and risk assessments.

YOUR OBLIGATION TO REPORT

You must report any concerns you may have about any other employee engaging in reportable conduct or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' that has been made to you, to the Principal, including information about yourself. If you are not sure whether the conduct is reportable conduct but consider that it is inappropriate behaviour, you must still report it.

You must also report to the Principal if you become aware that an employee has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving reportable conduct.

This includes information relating to you.

If the allegation involves the Principal, you are required to report to the Chairperson of the School Council.

CONTACT FOR PARENTS

The Headmaster or his nominee is the contact point for parents if they wish to report an allegation of reportable conduct against an employee.

WHAT IS REPORTABLE CONDUCT?

Reportable conduct is defined as:

- a) Any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence or an offence involving child abuse material);

- b) Any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; and
- c) Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child whether or not, in any case, with the consent of the child.

Reportable conduct does not extend to:

- a) Conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards; or
- b) The use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures; or
- c) Conduct of a class or kind exempted from being reportable conduct by the Ombudsman under section 25CA.

OTHER RELEVANT DEFINITIONS

Set out below are definitions of the various terms referred to above in relation to reportable conduct. NB - a child is a person under the age of 18 years for the purposes of the Ombudsman Act.

Behaviour that causes **psychological harm** to a child is behaviour that is obviously or very clearly unreasonable and results in significant harm or trauma to a child. There needs to be a proven causal link between the inappropriate behaviour and the harm, and the harm must be more than transient.

A child is a person under the age of 18 years for the purposes of the Ombudsman Act.

Ill-treatment captures those circumstances where a person treats a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, improper, inhumane or cruel manner. The focus is on the alleged conduct rather than the actual effect of the conduct on the child.

Ill-treatment can include disciplining or correcting a child in an obviously unreasonable and seriously inappropriate manner; making excessive and/or degrading demands on a child; hostile use of force towards a child; and/or pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate, degrading comments or behaviour towards a child.

Neglect includes either an action or inaction by a person who has care responsibility towards a child. The nature of the employee's responsibilities provides the context against which the conduct needs to be assessed. There are four aspects to neglect:

Supervisory neglect:

- An intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child that results in the death of, or significant harm to, a child, or
- An intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child or a significantly careless act or failure to act, that:
- Involves a gross breach of professional standards, and
- Has the potential to result in the death or significant harm to a child.

Carer neglect:

- Grossly inadequate care that involves depriving a child of the basic necessities of

life: such as the provision of food and drink, clothing, critical medical care or treatment, or shelter;

Failure to protect from abuse:

- An obviously or very clearly unreasonable failure to respond to information strongly indicating actual or potential serious abuse of a child;

Reckless act (or failure to act):

A reckless act, or failure to act, that;

- Involves a gross breach of professional standards; and
- Has the potential to result in the death of, or significant harm to, a child.

Physical Assault is any act by which a person intentionally inflicts unjustified use of physical force against another. An assault can also occur if a person causes another person to reasonably believe that unjustified force is going to be used against them. Even if a person who inflicts physical harm or causes another person to reasonably apprehend physical harm, but does not actually intend to inflict the harm or cause fear, they may still have committed an assault if they acted "recklessly".

'Recklessness' in this context relates to circumstances when the person ought to have known that their actions would cause a person physical harm or cause them to fear injury.

Assaults can include hitting, pushing, shoving, throwing objects or making threats to physically harm a child.

Reportable conviction means a conviction (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction), in NSW or elsewhere, of an offence involving reportable conduct.

Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Offences

Sexual misconduct has three categories, which include:

- Crossing professional boundaries;
- Sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour
- Grooming behaviour.

Sexual Misconduct - Crossing professional boundaries

Includes behaviour that can reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate and overly personal or intimate:

- Relationship with;
- Conduct towards; or
- Focus on;

a child or young person, or a group of children or young persons.

Sexual Misconduct - sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour

Behaviours involving sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour, which can constitute sexual misconduct. Some forms of this behaviour also involve crossing professional boundaries. This conduct may include:

- a) Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature.
- b) Comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner.
- c) Unwarranted and inappropriate touching.
- d) Sexual exhibitionism.
- e) Personal correspondence (including electronic communications such as emails and text messages) with a child or young person in relation to the adult's sexual feelings for a child or young person.
- f) Exposure of children and young people to sexual behaviour of others including display of pornography.
- g) Watching children undress. For example, in change rooms or toilets when supervision is not required or justified.

Sexual Misconduct - Grooming Behaviour

Grooming or procuring a child under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity is a sexual offence. However, Schedule 1(2) of the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act also recognises grooming as a form of sexual misconduct.

The types of grooming behaviour may include (but are not limited to) the following: Persuading a child or group of children that they have a "special" relationship, for example by:

- Undressing in front of a child.
- Encouraging inappropriate physical contact.
- Talking about sex.
- "Accidental" intimate touching.
- Inappropriately extending a relationship outside of work (except where it may be appropriate – for example where there was a pre-existing friendship with the child's family or as part of a normal social interactions in the community).
- Inappropriate personal communication (including emails, telephone calls, text messaging, social media and web forums) that explores sexual feelings or intimate personal feelings with a child.
- An adult requesting that a child keep any aspect of their relationship secret or using tactics to keep any aspect of the relationship secret, would generally increase likelihood that grooming is occurring.

Sexual Offences

Encompass all criminal offences involving a sexual element that are 'committed against, with, or in the presence of a child'. These offences include (but are not limited to) the following:

- a) Indecent assault.
- b) Sexual assault.
- c) Aggravated sexual assault.
- d) Sexual intercourse and attempted sexual intercourse.
- e) Possession/dissemination/production of child pornography or child abuse material.
- f) Using children to produce pornography.
- g) Grooming or procuring children under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity.
- h) Deemed non-consensual sexual activity on the basis of special care relationships.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN AN ALLEGATION OF REPORTABLE CONDUCT IS MADE?

Initial Steps

Once an allegation of reportable conduct against an employee is received, the Headmaster is required to:

- a) Determine on face value whether it is an allegation of reportable conduct;
- d) Assess whether Community Services or the Police need to be notified (i.e., if reasonable grounds to suspect that a child is at risk of significant harm or criminal offence);
- e) Notify the child's parents (unless to do so would be likely to compromise the investigation or any investigation by Community Services or the Police);
- f) Notify the Ombudsman within 30 days of receiving the allegation;
- g) Carry out a risk assessment and take action to reduce/remove risk, where appropriate; and,
- h) Investigate the allegation or appoint someone to investigate the allegation.

Investigation Principles

Knox will:

- a) Be mindful of the principles of procedural fairness;
- b) Inform the employee of the substance, with as much detail as possible, of the allegation(s) made against them;
- c) Provide the employee with a reasonable opportunity to put their case forward, either in writing, at a hearing or otherwise;
- d) Make reasonable inquiries or investigations before making a decision;

- e) Consider all relevant available evidence, including exculpatory evidence;
- f) Inform the **person subject of the allegation** (PSOA) of the substance of any allegations made against them and provide them with a reasonable opportunity to respond to the allegation(s);
- g) Make reasonable enquiries or investigations before making a decision;
- h) Avoid conflicts of interest;
- i) Conduct the investigation without unjustifiable delay;
- j) Handle the matter as confidentially as possible; and
- k) Provide appropriate support for all parties including the child/children, witnesses and the PSOA.

Investigation Steps

In an investigation the Principal or appointed investigator will generally:

- Interview relevant witnesses and gathers relevant documentation;
- Provide a letter of allegation to the PSOA;
- Interview the PSOA;
- Consider relevant evidence and make a preliminary finding in accordance with the NSW Ombudsman guidelines;
- Inform the PSOA of the preliminary finding and provide them with an opportunity to respond;
- Consider any response provided by the PSOA;
- Make a final finding in accordance with the NSW Ombudsman Guidelines;
- Decide on the disciplinary action, if any, to be taken against the PSOA;
- Apply the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) Guidelines and decide if the matter is reportable to the OCG; and
- Send the final report to the Ombudsman and report to the OCG (where required).

A PSOA may have an appropriate support person with them during the interview process. Such a person is there for support only and as a witness to the proceedings and not as an advocate or to take an active role.

The School will provide support for the child/children, through:

- Relevant teacher or other relevant pastoral personnel, where appropriate.
- Acknowledgement of the stress, as it relates to academic performance and co- curricular commitments.

RISK MANAGEMENT – AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION

Risk management means identifying the potential for an incident or accident to occur and taking steps to reduce the likelihood or severity of its occurrence.

The Principal will take appropriate action to minimise risks. This may include the PSOA being temporarily relieved of some duties, being required not to have contact with certain students, or being suspended from duty. When taking action to address any risks identified, Blue Mountains Steiner School will take into consideration the needs of the child(ren) and the PSOA.

Note: A decision to take action on the basis of a risk assessment is not indicative of the findings of the matter. Until the investigation is completed and a finding is made, any action, such as an employee being suspended, is not to be considered to be an indication that the alleged conduct by the employee did occur.

Ongoing Risk Management

The Principal will continually monitor risk during the investigation including in the light of any new relevant information that emerges.

Risk Management at the Conclusion of the Investigation

At the completion of the investigation, a finding will be made in relation to the allegation and a decision made by the Principal regarding what action, if any, is required in relation to the PSOA, the child (ren) involved and any other parties.

WHAT INFORMATION WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE PSOA?

The PSOA will be advised:

- That an allegation has been made against them (at the appropriate time in the investigation); and
- Of the substance of the allegation, or of any preliminary finding/s and the final finding/s.

The PSOA does not automatically have the right to:

- Know or have confirmed the identity of the person who made the allegation; or
- Be shown the content of the Ombudsman notification form or other investigation material that reveals all information provided by other employees or witnesses.

The WWC Act enables a person who has a finding referred to the OCG under the Act to request access to the records held by Blue Mountains Steiner School in relation to the finding of misconduct involving children.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

As a result of the allegations, investigation or final findings, BMSS may take disciplinary action against the PSOA (including termination of employment).

In relation to any disciplinary action the School will:

- Give the PSOA details of the proposed disciplinary action; and
- Give the PSOA a reasonable opportunity to respond before a final decision is made.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

It is important when dealing with allegations of reportable conduct that the matter be dealt with as confidentially as possible.

The Principal may disclose to a child allegedly the subject of reportable conduct, or to a parent of the child, information about the progress of the investigation into the allegation, the investigation findings and any action taken in response to those findings.

The School requires that all parties maintain confidentiality during the investigation including in relation to the handling and storing of documents and records.

Records about allegations of reportable conduct against employees will be kept by the Head of Staff Services and will be accessible by the Principal or with the Principal's express authority.

No employee may comment to the media about an allegation of reportable conduct unless expressly authorised by the Principal to do so.

If you become aware of a breach of confidentiality in relation to a reportable conduct allegation you must advise the Principal.

WWC ACT

General

The Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) is responsible for employment screening for child related employment. A Working with Children Check (Check) is a prerequisite for anyone in child-related work. It involves a national criminal history check and review of reported workplace misconduct findings. The result of a Check is either a clearance to work with children for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring by the OCG, and any relevant new records, which appear against a cleared applicant's name, may lead to the Check being revoked.

It is the responsibility of the child-related worker to ensure that when they are eligible to apply for a Check or when their Check is up for renewal that they do so.

The School Council must verify that the Principal holds a working with children check clearance.

If you are an existing employee, employed at Blue Mountains Steiner School in paid child-related work prior to the commencement of the new Working With Children system, or you are a volunteer, you are required to obtain a Check by 2019.

Responsibilities

The object of the WWC Act is to protect children:

- By not permitting certain persons to engage in child-related work; and
- By requiring persons engaged in child-related work to have working with children check clearances.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we keep an updated WWCC register that ensures to:

- Verifies online and records the status of each employee's check, as well as employees DOB, wwcc number, employment start date, verification date, verification outcome, expiry date, paid or volunteer .
- Only employ or engage employees who have a valid Check; and
- Report findings of misconduct involving children made against volunteers

At BMSS we will report findings of misconduct involving children made against volunteers.

Blue Mountains Steiner School employees and eligible volunteers are required to:

- Hold and maintain a valid Check (*the School acknowledges some exemptions do apply to volunteers*);
- Not engage in child-related work at any time that they are subjected to an interim bar or a bar; and
- Report to the Principal if they are no longer eligible for a Check, the status of their Check changes or are notified by the OCG that they are subjected to a risk assessment.

All volunteers are required to:

- Read the School's Child Protection Policy and Volunteer Code of Conduct. Some volunteers will be involved in school camps and are required to a current WWC
- To be aware and follow the expectations of conduct expressed in the School Staff Code of Conduct and Volunteer Code of Conduct.

At BMSS all staff completes a mandatory reporting and child protection training certificate every year. These are recorded and kept on our staff files with a register of this kept in the school office.

At Blue Mountains Steiner School we will ensure that our contracted cleaning staff organize their own wwcc certification and ensure that wwcc procedures are in place.

DEFINITIONS

Final Bar

This bar is applied based on a decision made by the OCG, following a risk assessment. This person is barred against working with children.

Interim Bar

An interim bar is issued to high-risk individuals to prevent them from continuing to work with children while a risk assessment is conducted. An interim bar may be applied for up to 12 months. If an interim bar remains in place for six months or longer, it may be appealed against through the Administrative Decisions Tribunal.

Not everyone who is subject to a risk assessment will receive an interim bar; only those representing a serious and immediate risk to children.

Interim bars are issued only for risks considered likely to result in a final bar.

Child-related worker

A person at Blue Mountains Steiner School who has physical contact or face-to-face contact with children, including volunteer work, may commence work once they have completed the Check application process.

If you are unclear if your role is child-related, you should speak with the Principal.

Disqualified person

A disqualified person is a person who has been convicted, or against whom proceedings have been commenced for a disqualifying offence outlined in Schedule 2 of WWC Act.II.

A disqualified person is a person who has a bar preventing them from working with children in child-related work.

It is an offence for an employer to knowingly engage a child-related worker when they do not hold a Check or who has a bar or an interim bar.

It is an offence for an employee to engage in child-related work when they do not hold a Check or who has a bar or an interim bar.

Findings of misconduct involving children

Blue Mountains Steiner School will report to the OCG when a finding has been made that the person (an employee of the School) subject to the finding engaged in:

- Sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child, including grooming of a child; or
- Any serious physical assault of a child.

The School will advise the person that the OCG has been notified of a finding of misconduct involving children.

The WWC Act enables a person who has a finding referred to the OCG under the Act to request access to the records held by Blue Mountains Steiner School in relation to the finding of misconduct involving children.

Reporting body

Independent Schools that are members of the AISNSW are defined as a reporting body by the WWC Act.

Section 35 of the WWC Act requires Blue Mountains Steiner School to notify the OCG on findings of misconduct involving children made against an employee. Blue Mountains Steiner School may also be obliged to report, amend or provide additional information to the OCG as outlined in the WWC Act.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is an evaluation of an individual's suitability for child-related work.

The OCG will conduct a risk assessment on a person's suitability to work with children when a new record is received that triggers a risk assessment. This may include an offence under Schedule 1, pattern of behaviour or offences involving violence or sexual misconduct representing a risk to children, findings of misconduct involving children or notification made to OCG by the Ombudsman.

Working With Children Check Clearance

A Working with Children Check (Check) means authorisation under the WWC Act to engage in child-related work. An employee will be issued with a number that is to be provided to Blue Mountains Steiner School to verify the status of an employee's Check.

It is mandatory for all staff to have a WWCC. To qualify for a WWC screening, you must be over 18 years old. Consequently, Blue Mountains Steiner School will not employ anyone under 18 years of age.

All overnight camps and excursions – parents and volunteers must have a valid working with children check.

The BMSS Report Service for Raising Matters of Serious Concern

PURPOSE

To develop and implement a process by which students, parents and community members can confidently raise concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and professionally managed in a timely, confidential and appropriate manner. BMSS is committed to ensuring the School and all of its employees, act and maintain a culture of compliance and ethical behavioral standards. These standards must at all times be compliant with the law, and the School's ethical standards, as set out in our Code of Conduct policies.

The BMSS School Council recognizes that any genuine commitment to detecting and preventing illegal, unethical and unsatisfactory conduct or misconduct must include an appropriate mechanism whereby students (former and current), parents, staff and the broader school community, can report their concerns freely and without fear of repercussion. This policy provides such a mechanism, by encouraging the reporting of such conduct and also acting as a preventative measure to actively discourage and future wrongdoings.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following BMSS policies:

- BMSS Child Protection Policy
- BMSS Bullying and Harassment Policy
- BMSS Code of Conduct Staff, Parents and Carers / Students/ Volunteers
- BMSS WHS Policy
- BMSS Safe and Supportive Environment Policy
- BMSS Grievance Policy

Blue Mountains Steiner School would encourage all students, parents, staff members or other persons involved with the School who wish to make a report in connection with misconduct to utilize the processes outlined in the above policies in the first instance.

When there is a reasonable concern that these policies and reporting procedures have not been appropriately adhered to a report should be made through the BMSS Report Service for Raising a Serious Concern.

WHAT TYPES OF MATTERS SHOULD BE REPORTED UNDER THIS POLICY?

- Child Abuse
- Unsafe work practices
- Coercion, harassment or discrimination
- Dishonest, fraudulent or corrupt conduct or practices
- Misleading or deceptive conduct, including conduct or representation which amount to improper or misleading accounting or financial reporting practices
- Illegal acts including theft, drug sale or use, violence or threatened violence and criminal damage against property
- Breaches of relevant laws, regulations, by-laws
- Any other conduct which may cause injury to individuals or loss to the school or be otherwise detrimental to individuals or to the School

Because BMSS understands that it often takes many years for the survivors of child abuse to come forward, allegations of past child protection breaches may also be reported.

WHAT IF I AM WRONG?

There is an expectation that any concerns raised will be made in good faith and founded on truthful events. All concerns will be thoroughly investigated to ensure that any matters raised can be substantiated. Abuse of the confidential reporting process will not be tolerated and will be treated as a serious breach of the School's Code of Conduct.

DO I HAVE TO LEAVE MY NAME?

The service is confidential so you do not have to leave your name. However, it would greatly assist with the investigation and resolution of any matter if the name and details of the reporter are known.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE REPORTS?

All matters will be investigated by the Principal or School Chaplain in a manner subject to ethical and fairness principles. The investigation may include informing the person against whom the allegations have been made, involvement of third parties such as the ombudsman, Children's Guardian etc., investigation, notification to the Chair of Council and a full report.

HOW TO MAKE A REPORT

A student, parent, staff member or member of the public who wishes to make a report in connection with reportable conduct can contact the Principal or School Chaplain by telephone, email or in writing.

It is not necessary for there to be conclusive evidence of the conduct sought to be reported, as long as there is reasonable grounds to believe the truth of the matter and the report is made in good faith. Wherever possible, supporting information should be provided at the time of making the report.

The School Principal or School Chaplain will commence the initial collection of data, referring or escalating the matter to the relevant external regulatory body and to the School Council. Where a report is about a Council Member or Executive Staff member, that person will be excluded from the review process to ensure transparency.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Reports may be made anonymously. Where a person wishes to remain anonymous, their identity will not be disclosed, unless required by law.

The information provided will be held securely and kept confidential, subject to the need to disclose the information to conduct an investigation and fulfil any reporting obligations.

However, it may assist the investigation if the name and contact details of the reporter are made available at the time of making the report, to enable any clarification or further information to be sought.

Where the identity of the reporter is disclosed or would be obvious, steps will be taken in consultation with the reporter should it be necessary to protect the reporter. The steps may include leave of absence or relocation.

The identity or any information that could lead to the identity of a person who has made a report will not be released to any person who is not involved in the investigation/resolution of the matter. Where there is evidence that a person has made a false report of reportable conduct, then that conduct itself would be considered a serious matter and render the person concerned subject to a disciplinary proceeding. Similarly where any person takes retribution against a person who

has made a report in good faith, then that conduct itself would be considered a serious matter and would render the person concerned subject to disciplinary measures. All persons making a report are assured that in making a report they will not be personally disadvantaged by dismissal, demotion, any form of harassment, discrimination, victimisation or current or future bias. Any person who, having made a report, believes that they have been personally disadvantaged has an automatic right of appeal to the Headmaster or Chairperson, whose decision will be complied with.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A REPORT IS MADE?

When report is made:

- the process will be explained to you;
- you will be asked about whether you wish to remain anonymous;
- you will be asked to provide details of the reportable conduct and you may be asked questions about the reportable conduct;
- a report will be compiled
- The principal or School Chaplain will conduct an investigation into the conduct.

The School is committed to ensuring the Principal or School Chaplain are appropriately qualified for this role and readily accessible. Further, that they do not have an actual or perceived conflict and are impartial. Where the Principal, School Chaplain or Council Chairperson determines that the allegations are of a very serious nature, an external investigator may be engaged from AIS.

The conduct of the investigation will be in a manner that is transparent (to the extent permitted by the sensitivity of the reportable conduct and any request for anonymity), objective and without bias.

The investigation will typically include the following steps:

1. the collection of relevant information;
2. person/s against whom allegations have been made will be informed of the substance of the allegations against them and provided with an opportunity to respond;
3. consideration will be given to all submissions that are made, taking into account relevant matters and not taking into account irrelevant matters;
4. School Council informed of the progress and status of the investigation; and
5. the person making the report informed of the progress and outcome of the investigation (if they request to be so informed).

In certain circumstances it may be necessary to inform statutory authorities of reportable conduct, such as the Ombudsman, the Children's Guardian and the Police, and report in relation to the conduct and outcome of the investigation.

The School is committed to rectifying any wrongdoing verified by the investigation.

ABUSE OF REPORTING PROCESS

Reports should be made in good faith and based on facts believed to be true. Abuse of the confidential reporting process will amount to a serious breach of the School's Code of Conduct.

Intentionally making false reports will give rise to disciplinary action, where appropriate. Similarly any action taken in retribution against a person who has made a report in good faith will give rise to disciplinary action.

MONITORING AND TRAINING

The School will monitor and review this policy regularly to assess its effectiveness in encouraging the reporting of reportable conduct, protection of persons making reports, and investigation of reports.

Education and training about the procedures involved under this BMSS Report Service Policy will be provided to those involved in managing or investigating disclosures. The School's community will also be educated and kept informed in relation to the Policy and the protections and procedures contained therein.

2019 Reporting Area 11

See School Improvement Plan included in Reporting Area 1

2019 Reporting Area 12

Initiatives promoting respect and responsibility

The cornerstone of the Blue Mountains Steiner School learning community is the promotion of health and well-being in the context of positive, respectful and meaningful relationships. It is the school's endeavour to be very mindful of the social and emotional competence of our students and to make this fundamental to all of the schools pedagogical practices and programs. The incorporation of general well-being as a whole school endeavour augments benefit to our students in the realms of resilience, academic quality, general health and social capital. Student welfare is integrated into the entire life of the school as a collaborative community process.

In essence the Blue Mountains Steiner School aims to gently meet the child, explore the potential of the child's abilities, encourage personal problem solving, develop and enhance relationships and monitor the personal growth of every child in the cognitive, affective and kinaesthetic domains of learning. The Blue Mountains Steiner School offers an environment which is safe, supportive and caring and embraces inclusivity.

It is the intention of the Blue Mountains Education experience to promote and support a deep understanding of self, to build confidence and self-efficacy, offer opportunities for healthy risk taking, develop the capacity to make informed decisions, learn skills to contribute effectively in citizenship, develop the ability to set goals, practice negotiation and communication, participate in reflection, enhance the capacity for empowerment and connectedness.

Students participate in Peer Support Programs, Restorative Practice Work, Circles and Discussions, Self-esteem and confidence building in the natural environment, Adventure and Wilderness Education, Mindfulness training, Living History and Positive Education programs.

We strive to work together in close partnership with students and families to ensure the best outcomes for the students.

Educators at Blue Mountains Steiner School strive to ensure our students feel happy, safe and are valued members of our school community. We are a school based upon a philosophy that values the importance of educating children in the context of building positive healthy relationships with peers, teachers and community members. Our student needs are met by a community that respects and acknowledges the developmental stage of the child. Our community has a strong appreciation of process, context and school narrative which supports a student's journey in reaching developmental milestones. By understanding our student's nature and needs staff can provide care and support to assist them in developing a positive self-concept, growing self-esteem, confidence and mutual respect and responsibility of self and the school community.

Blue Mountains Steiner School encourages students to develop a sense of their place as an individual within a group. Because we recognise that the child develops this awareness of individuality slowly (becoming strong at around nine years of age), teachers must be aware of the general 'age culture' belonging to the children in their care, as well as the specific needs of their students. This awareness of child development is studied and discussed in pedagogical meetings and Teacher Training Modules through Sydney Rudolf Steiner College

and Glenaeon School (our teachers are involved in this further training). Teachers also aim to complete a Child Study on each child in their care by the time the children reach Class 6.

We are always working on developing student to student and student to teacher relationships which enhance self-regulation in our learning environment. Behaviour management strategies used at the school always aim to assist the child become more empowered in resolving conflict which recognises relationships as the cornerstone of our personal growth. A focus on the growing awareness of the child's development enables us to continually improve the way we approach our discipline and behaviour policies. This is reflected in the way we deal with interpersonal conflicts between students and the way in which we discuss these issues with parents.

The restorative practice model we have adopted continues to be used, particularly in the context of choices the children are making. Some of the values embedded in this approach that fit particularly well with our school philosophy are those that value relationships and seek to engage people in restoring relationships damaged by conflict, as well as learning that helps promote the development of self-discipline. Circle work which focuses on the issue and not personalities is used to develop our students understanding of compassion and empathy.

We have a School Chaplain to support the students in our school. The role includes liaising with teachers regarding the needs of individual students, providing activities to supplement current playground activities, observing playground dynamics and involvement in class social activities (including boys and girls groups, formal and informal circles and class camps). The Blue Mountains Steiner School outdoor education program forms an integral part of our school leadership program. The importance of a comprehensive understanding of the natural world is crucial to the development of the child's spiritual world.

The school runs a Peer Support program based on the Peer Support Australia framework for primary students. Class 6 students lead multi-aged groups of children from classes 1-5. Learning from these activities engenders mutual respect and cooperation, skills and strategies for developing friendships and practicing problem solving skills. The activities range from 'getting to know you games' to discussions, to active cooperative games. We have continued to use the Peer Support Australia modules as a resource for our Peer Support Program. We have also extended this focus into our Class 5/6 Leadership program and as a part of the schools outdoor education program.

Martin Buckmaster
School Chaplain

2019 Reporting Area 13

Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

Parents

Blue Mountains Steiner School welcomes and encourages parent involvement, and views the whole school community as participating in an inspiring teaching and learning environment. There are roles taken up by parents in many spheres of the School, from leadership on School Council and parent committees, to being involved by assisting in the classroom, at event days, working bees or with the Festival Parent Choir. The parents enjoy connecting with the life of the school, which is in turn nurturing for the family and the whole school community.

Due to the close relationship with our parent community we collect regular feedback, which is then communicated to the relevant parties with a process followed through to decide whether or not this feedback is implemented and if so, how it is implemented.

Besides specific parent online surveys our main feedback channels lie with the Principal, School Chaplain and School Council. Class teachers also take on feedback from parents and other community members and feed it back either to the Principal directly or at our weekly meetings.

The parents are supportive of the work of the school staff, and encourage us to continue to strengthen the ethos of the school to differentiate from mainstream education. Parent education articles in the school newsletter, and talks at event days and information evenings assist in this way. Parents also like to get involved by running events, craft groups or information sessions at the school for other parents.

In 2019 we collected specific parent feedback on: Transition to high school, Learning methodology, our Restorative Practice program, our Stage Model, preferred fundraising events for 2019 and ideas for community events for 2019, our OE and PDHPE program, the shared 5/6 teaching team, our music program, our art program, effectiveness of communication, confidence in our Literacy and Numeracy curriculum and delivery, our work with additional needs, approachability of staff, tradition of Class 6 farewell and energy cost to parents, festivals and events, grounds and resources.

Students with specific social issues and behavioural plans continued to be monitored and parents of children with behavioural plans, health plans or with NCCD related ILP's were kept informed and involved in their child's plan. Issues were investigated and addressed as needed. Due to parent feedback we have learnt that evidence based observations to be passed onto parents regularly is effective along with the necessity to work in partnership with all carers and all involved professionals. We have also learnt that our teaching methods need to be much more explicit, even if teaching/ modelling appropriate behaviours.

Our transition to high school program has received extremely positive feedback after ensuring that the Stage 3 students are IT savvy as well as assessment task savvy. Our ability to take them through feedback/ rubric specific to lessons and tasks assisted in their high school preparation as well as in their confidence in going to high school. All parents and students were also very supportive of our OE/ PDHPE/ Leadership program run by the School Chaplain and Stage 3 Teacher.

The parent and student feedback data helped us to identify the areas in numeracy and literacy that we most need to work on with specifics to year levels, and the areas within the primary school journey in which the parents become the most anxious about literacy/ numeracy. The parents continue to express a high level of satisfaction with our Stage Model; in particular they like the consistency of teachers and knowing they will have a different teacher each Stage of the curriculum with specific skills to each Stage.

It was highlighted that our communication with parents was effective if through emails/ or texts or anything else online, otherwise information was missed or lost. Parents also feedback that parent/ teacher interviews or parent nights were much easier to attend if out of working hours. They loved our new online booking system and attending the parent/ teacher interviews over a series of nights with all of the teachers at the same time.

Generally, the parent community as usual was very vibrant and supportive. The 2 most common areas to lose enrolments include financial reasons and small social groups.

Students

Student feedback is encouraged both within the classroom, during playtimes, through their Peer Support groups, through Restorative Practice sessions, in goal setting times, parent/teacher interviews and with the School Chaplain.

In Term 1 and 2 we addressed some bullying issues within the classroom and playground due to the need arising from a student feedback survey. We also introduced more explicit social teachings through Peer Support, Restorative Practice and the School Chaplain and Principal.

The students feedback that the playground area and activities were limited and we responded by introducing more teacher led play activities such as weekly dance, soccer, touch football, drama and craft.

The children report especially valuing the many movement-based, creative and interactive activities, such as ball games, art work, bush playtime, Cross Country Run, camps, excursions, baking, bushwalks, and event days such as festivals and Harmony Day. In addition, the Swimming and Gymnastics lessons, as well as Language (Japanese), Craft, and participating in local community events such as the Carols evening. The Stage 3 students have enjoyed having the Term 4 camps separated (for Classes 5&6) and it is important for them to have social activities with other schools. We provided 4 opportunities for this in 2019. The Stage 3 students have enjoyed our new IT program and they also like having ex-students come back to help us in our Transition to High School program. The Stage 3 students wrote their own play in 2019 in a response to student need and request and the Japanese exchange- students were invited back after student request.

Our students feel comfortable to make suggestions, and know that they are heard. They also enjoy being enabled to assist in the improvement process following their suggestion, as far as possible.

Many parents tell us that their child dislikes having to stay home when experiencing illness!

Teachers

The Teaching Staff have noted the following areas to work on:

- More PL in all areas of the curriculum
- A whole school explicit literacy/ numeracy that is sequential and systematic.
- A more effective Parent Code of Conduct
- More support on the ground, when dealing with difficult behaviours
- A need for greater Leadership support in order to have the time to work through issues daily (due to Teaching Principal)
- A breakdown of how to write programs and Scope and Sequence to comply to NESA registration process.
- More opportunity for skills sharing with colleagues;
- More PL to understand the APS and new accreditation process
- More PL with local Indigenous Elders
- Working with Bullying and Harassment issues/ incidents/ codes of conduct within the school
- A more sustainable workload
- How to gain more appreciation from parents and families
- Clothing Policy
- How to improve student's learning abilities and self discipline

Overall the teacher's feel heard and love working in our school. We maintain our staff and all existing staff have a long term vision in regards to their involvement with BMSS.

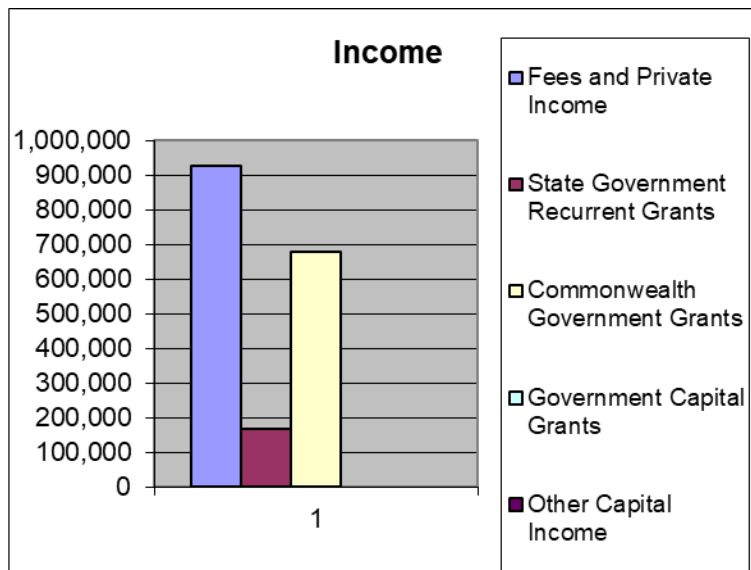
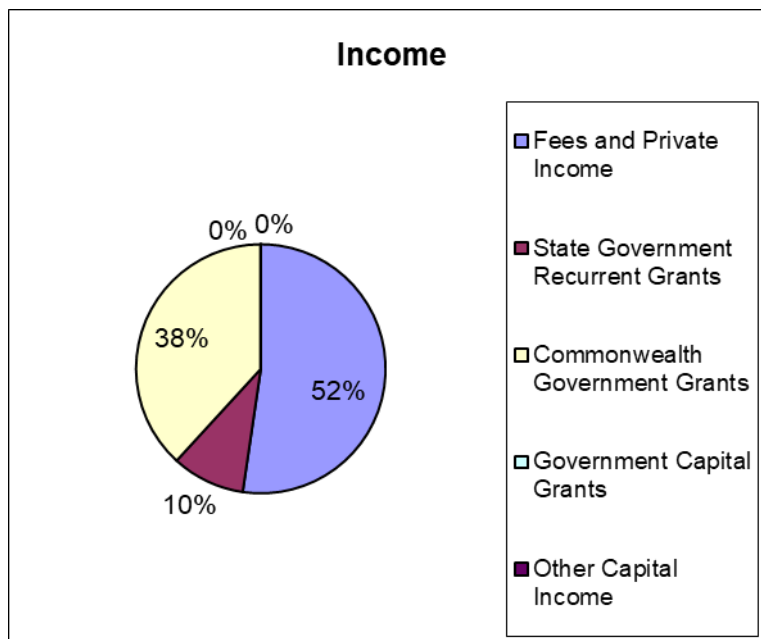
Overall, the level of satisfaction from members of school community was quite high in 2019.

2019 Reporting Area 14

Summary financial information

Recurrent Income

Fees and Private Income	928,150
State Government Recurrent Grants	168,035
Commonwealth Government Grants	677,607
Government Capital Grants	
Other Capital Income	
	<hr/>
	<u>1,773,792</u>



Expenditure

Salaries, Allowances and Related Expenditure	1,333,254	76.57%
Non-Salary Expenditure	407,898	23.43%
Capital Expenditure		0.00%
	<u>1,741,152</u>	<u>100.00%</u>

