

# Blue Mountains Steiner School

## Annual Report 2021



*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  
83 Clearview Parade, Hazelbrook NSW 2779  
Phone: 02 4758 6044 Fax: 02 4758 9109  
Email: [admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au](mailto:admin@bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au)

## 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 2021  
Our Vision  
Our Mission  
Our Values  
Our Aims

#### 3. STUDENT OUTCOMES IN NATIONAL AND STATEWIDE TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS N/A

#### 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 1<sup>st</sup> July in the year following the reporting year.

Procedures for implementing the policy include:

- The School will identify the staff member(s) responsible for coordinating the final preparation and distribution of the annual report to NESA and other stakeholders as required.
- For each reporting area, the coordinator 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 coordinator 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 coordinator will oversee the preparation of the report in an online or appropriate electronic form to provide to NESA through *RANGS Online*.
- The coordinator 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 2021
- 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.

## **2021 Reporting Area 1**

### **A message from key school bodies**

#### **Council Report**

The 38<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was held in March 2021.

At this meeting Chair Maia Giordano, Deputy Chair Renee Boucher and Treasurer Dance Johnston continued in their roles. We are incredibly grateful to each of them for their dedicated service and expertise.

Stephanie Smith joined as a preschool representative. Caroline Noonan-Edwards and Xuela Sledge joined observers.

#### **Chair's Report**

##### **Introduction**

As individuals we represent and present different perspectives from our school community and areas of expertise. As a team, we work together in the best interests of the school so that our school continues to strengthen and consolidate what we have. We have an active and engaged School Council that has meant that, in spite of the rolling changes of COVID-19 public health orders and lockdowns, we have achieved a lot at a governance level. Quietly working away at the ongoing, critical role of ensuring robust governance and financial management to allow the school to flourish.

##### **2021 Council Members**

Maia Giordano, Chair  
Renee Boucher, Deputy Chair  
Dance Johnston, Treasurer  
Martin Buckmaster, Principal  
Francine O'Dea, Head of College  
Catherine Cox, Head of Preschool  
Stephanie Smith, Parent/Teacher Representative  
Andreea Lupuleasa, Parent Representative

##### **Summary of activities and progress**

This year the Council has continued its focus on embedding and updating new governance and finance processes, policies and record keeping.

Key highlights include:

- Tracking well towards full enrollment
- Sound Fiscal Management and debt reduction
- In consultation with the College of Teachers, Council has developed and approved 9 policies and procedures with a further 4 that are drafted or awaiting development.
- Launching the BMSS Strategic Plan 2021-26
- Being part of the Office of the Children's Guardian pilot program to review and provide BMSS with a status report on how we are tracking with regards to implementing the 10 Child Safe Standards.
- Appointing Cath Cox to Council in order maintain ongoing representation from Wattle Glow Preschool

##### **Upcoming priorities**

Over the coming year our governance priorities are to:

- Improve communications and updates from Council to staff, College of Teachers and our school community.
- Complete the process of updating and implementing governance policies and procedures.
- Work with College of Teachers, Preschool and the school community to update our Constitution

- Implement and exceed the Office of the Children's Guardian Child Safe Standards
- Oversee the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2021-26
- Achieve full enrolment.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to acknowledge and give sincere thanks to all Council members who, as volunteer School Council Directors, give their time and expertise for the betterment of our wonderful school.

I would like to give particular thanks to Renée Boucher, Dance Johnston and Andreea Lupuleasa who, respectively have helped ensure robust record keeping, improved budget and financial management and advancing governance and risk policies.

I would like to acknowledge College of Teachers representatives Francine O'Dea, Cath Cox and Stephanie Smith who provide a unique and invaluable perspective and expertise that enriches our decision making.

Martin, as Principal you have continued to grow and strengthen our school and we are immeasurably grateful to the seeds you have sown and nurtured that will continue to enrich the school.

## **Principal's Report**

The reports that follow from all parts of the school reveal many ways the pandemic of 2021/2021 brought disruption and the need to adapt quickly to so many of the Blue Mountains Steiner School's seasonal and traditional practices.

They also highlight how our staff and community, while challenged and now without stress, also saw this as an opportunity to learn, practice and cultivate new skills.

### **Term 1**

We were proud to finally launch the result of a year's work in the form of a brand-new community-illustrated 5 Year Strategic Plan at the 2021 38<sup>th</sup> AGM. We were also very excited to be able to celebrate the Primary Autumn Festival with parents and carers out of doors as the sun set, with the blessings of a small sun shower.

From feedback we received everybody enjoyed and welcomed this much-needed opportunity to reconnect after a year of lockdowns and uncertainty. Wattle Glow Early Learning was also able to celebrate a very successful Harvest Day, with a record turnout, and Parent/Teacher Meetings went ahead in person.

### **Term 2**

We welcomed our Kindergarten teacher back after 9 months' compassionate leave caring for her family. The Kindergarten Winter Festival joyfully went ahead as did the Primary Festival, albeit a scaled back version, with an outdoor Firesticks performance and a weather-induced indoor Spiral Ceremony for a limited number of participants. Staff took their first brave steps into educating using digital technology as a tool. Behind the scenes, the school's information and communication systems needed to be overhauled and training provided.

Everyone continued to adapt as new COVID restrictions came into effect on 24/6/21. Class 3-4 teacher left due to personal reasons, and a new job share role was created until we could advertise for a new permanent teacher.

### **Term 3**

Remote learning restarted on 14/7/21, including creating and providing home learning craft packs. After strong indicators regarding demand, we were able to provide an Out-of-hours (OOSH)/Before and After School Care (BASC) service, which has become very popular. Our Annual Survey was sent and promoted within the community.

We continued to communicate ever-changing Public Health Order requirements.

A new bus driver was engaged 13/7/21, as our previous driver retired. Kindergarten interviews were successfully held during July via Zoom. COVID restrictions tightened once again and staff who could, worked from home, while teaching staff were required to run home and at school

learning programs. We moved to a reduced face-to-face teacher roster with an emphasis on learning from home.

We ran a post-lockdown survey to gauge community perception and experience of how well we managed the situation, with generally positive feedback. Class teachers held regular Zoom video calls for home-learners. Science Week was held online, and Playgroup was cancelled for the rest of the term.

A new feedback channel was created and promoted, offering the community a clear line of communication to the principal and/or Council Chair. This was promoted via weekly communications including current PHOs to parent/carers. COVID-safe Fathers' Day Stall went ahead. An online *Spring it on!* Presentation slideshow was developed with the aim of helping parents/carers feel connected even though we couldn't go ahead with the Spring Festival. Lockdown craft packs were offered to home learners for preschool.

We were overjoyed to be able to return to face-to-face learning earlier than planned on 18/10/21 for Preschool, Kindy and Class 1; then classes 2-6 returned 25 October 2021,

#### **Term 4**

The voting process to approve the proposed MEA for teachers and operational staff was carried out. Everyone came back to school in Week 6 to reconnect after a period of remote learning. Class 5/6 were ecstatic to go on an excursion to Yarramundi, and local bushwalking restarted. Finally, we were able to hold a COVID-safe Year 6 farewell and End of Year Class 6 Assembly with only parents attending.

#### **Challenges, hope and the future**

Financially the pandemic raised some challenging questions for Council and the Leadership Team on staffing, resourcing, and fiscal management.

We managed by making some tough decisions on discretionary spending. We worked hard to ensure the unfolding crisis did not impact staff employment, aware that quality teachers need to be supported and resourced to maintain high quality teaching.

At the same time, we did our best to support families suffering financial distress. Council made a commitment that no child would leave the school because of COVID-19 financial reasons and agreed to offer discounts to support those in need.

It was sad that we could not properly hold all our annual events in the usual way, however, we did our best to find some way to celebrate our journey as a school.

Progress was made on all our Strategic Goals, with one strategic target exceeding all expectations - Preschool numbers ended the year remarkably close to full.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the dedication and commitment of our wonderful School Council. All who volunteer on Council offer their time and expertise freely. This year they provided unwavering support, with the Finance Committee in particular meeting many times to assist with managing the school's finances.

The whole school pulled together, working hard behind the scenes, to manage all aspects of our school's response to the pandemic and I am grateful for the efforts of all.

In 2021 we learned some profound lessons about vulnerability, resilience, ourselves, and each other. We worked together, listening, reflecting, and doing the challenging work to keep our shared vision of tending to and providing the rich soil for the seeds to grow, always at the front of our minds.

**Martin Buckmaster**  
Principal

# Treasurer's Report 2021

## PROFIT

The school reported a profit of \$350k, which is down from 2020's profit of \$425k. However, each of these had extraordinary income that needs to be accounted for to understand the school's underlying operating profit.

JobKeeper income received in 2020 was a government stimulus that was a boon for the school. The additional assistance helped the school through the difficult periods of the initial COVID-19 lockdowns. However, it was in excess of the school's lost income for the year. In addition to this stimulus, the school benefitted from tax income that offset liabilities in the form of Cash Flow Boost.

These extraordinary forms of income amounted to \$449,000 for the school. After accounting for extraordinary expenses and the required costs of eligibility for the above income, the school recorded an operating profit of approximately \$90,000.

For 2021, the school received \$204k in extraordinary income, including \$154k of JobSaver, a similar stimulus to JobKeeper, and \$50k from sale of plant. After adjusting for costs of eligibility for the stimulus, the school recorded an operating profit of \$190k for the year.

The increase of operating from 2020 to 2021 of \$100,000 demonstrates the strength of the school year on year and the ability of management and staff to elevate the value of the school to students and families.

## ASSETS & LIABILITIES

The cashflow that 2020 brought to the school allowed the school to invest in itself during 2021. This has led to new play equipment, upgraded paths, a new bus, and other improvements and maintenance. It also allowed the school to significantly reduce its financial liabilities with a path to paying the most significant debt out completely by the end of 2022. This will further increase the school's profit in future years by almost eliminating the costs of financing.

## CASHFLOW

Even with this expenditure, the school maintains a strong cash position, giving financial strength and options for future investment or ability to react to the unforeseen. While the school had negative cashflow of \$84k, this was with a reduction of debt of \$241k. Therefore, the investment in the school's capital improvements were made without detriment to the cashflow of the school.

Moving into 2022, the school has the financial strength to completely repay its most costly sources of debt, continue to invest in itself with capital improvements, and commence a path to increasing reserves.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to recognise the management of the primary school and the preschool, Martin and Cath, as significant contributors to the financial strength of the school. Their efforts to make the financial aspects a prime consideration without compromising the quality of the school's offerings have been a definite contributor to the continuing strength of the school. The quality of the teachers, staff, and curriculum, along with the community built, is ultimately the true source of the financial strength of the school. I would also like to thank the other council members, Maia, Renee, Andreea, Stephanie, Martin, Cath, and Francine have all contributed to the school building on its strength with their varied expertise and skills. I look forward to this continuing with the new Council.

Dance Johnston  
Treasurer

## **Strategic Plan**

Please click on link below to view our Strategic Plan 2021-2026:

<https://bluemountainssteiner.nsw.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/BMSS-Strategic-Plan-Report-year1.pdf>



## Wattle Glow Steiner Preschool Team Leader's Report 2021

Wattle Glows hours continue to 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 grow alongside the Kindergarten children and Francine (Kindy teacher).

Bush Play continues to run 2 days per week. Playgroup sessions were suspended due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

### Wattle Glow Preschool Enrolments 2021

Room	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Boronia Room	10	10	10	10	10
Wattle Glow Room	22	17	20	21	15

### 2021 Annual Report Highlights

- 2021 began with the positivity and expectation of the new year, however, by March, it soon became apparent that we were facing another year of lock downs, restrictions, low attendance, and social postponements. We were lucky enough to host a combined Playgroup and Preschool Winter festival in June and invite our families for soup, bread, craft, songs, and music. This event was shortly followed by the birth of Juliana's baby.
- Throughout the year we continued to follow the daily, weekly, and seasonal rhythms which provide the soul enriching consistency of routine and ritual that support the children at Wattle Glow and we continued to celebrate our seasonal festivals with the children.
- Throughout COVID-19 restrictions we remained open, and we continued to build on our COVID-Safe policies and procedures by establishing new arrival and departure protocols. These remained in place for the remainder of 2021.

### Staff Development

Many courses were cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions; however, some staff were able to complete the following:

- Steiner Education Early Childhood Teaching – Foundation (self funded)
- Vital Years online conference
- Seasonal craft workshops
- Local Indigenous culture
- Staff Arrivals and Departures
- Storytelling Workshop
- Eurythmy Workshop

### 2021 Preschool Nominated Supervisors:

Catherine Cox

Martin Buckmaster

### Preschool staffing

- Early Childhood Teachers (4)
- Diploma Educators (3)
- Certificate 3 Educators (5)

## Adult Learning Group 2021

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'.

Martin Buckmaster, 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 2021 we held parent/teacher interviews toward the end of each semester by phone or zoom for all of the classes as well as a February parent/teacher night for each of the classes.

Regular weekly communications through our weekly News Sheet by our Principal Martin Buckmaster to parents and carers regarding continually updating information as it was received from NSW Health regarding COVID-19 school procedures (such as student pick-up/ drop-off, and Learning At Home options). These communications also included sharing information from professional bodies such as maintaining student and family wellbeing during those unusual and stressful times, and also specifically relating to changes to school events.

Also in the weekly News Sheet was published information about Adult Learning workshops including "The Art of Caring" at the Sydney Rudolf Steiner College and "Celebrating Birthdays" with Ebba Bodame. Parents and Carers were informed of the School Community Garden and invited to join gardening working bees. Parents were invited to attend the Strategic Plan 2021-2026 Launch on 18 May 2021. Instructions for festivals were communicated, and the AGM, made aware of the process and then results of the Student Satisfaction Survey, and invited to access the Parent Portal and the School App.

We utilised social media to gain broader access to interested members of the school community and the broader community. Numerous articles on Steiner education and student/ family wellbeing were shared on the school's Facebook and Instagram pages.

## 2021 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 2 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

### **2021 Reporting Area 3**

#### **School performance in national and state-wide tests and examinations**

##### **NAPLAN**

Please click on link below for 2021 NAPLAN results:

<https://www.myschool.edu.au/school/43754/naplan/results>

### **2021 Reporting Area 4**

#### **Senior secondary outcomes**

N/A

### **2021 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).

<b>Group Professional Learning Topics covered throughout 2021:</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Attended by</b>
22/1/21	Strategic Planning Meeting - Whole staff visioning and planning - led by school principal Martin Buckmaster	All Staff
22/1/21	Setting goals and Establishing Teaching Staff Meeting protocols - one teacher's meeting and one College Meeting each week. Planning, Programming and setting dates for the year.	Teaching Staff
4/2/21	College Meeting – Set dates for Programs and Teacher appraisals	College members
Term 1 2021	Staff Appraisals/ Professional Evaluation and Teaching Standards	All Teaching Staff
11/2/21	Mandatory Reporting/ Child Protection Compliance Complispace Assurance Platform Policies review	All Teaching Staff
11/2/21	Council Members training with Maia Giordano – Strategic Planning	Council Members
25/3/21	Council Chair met with teaching staff for shared forum of discussion, visioning and the launching of the Strategic Plan Document.	All Teaching staff
1/4 /21	First Aid – First Response	All Staff
18/5/21	Launch of the Strategic Plan to the School Community	All Teaching Staff
Term 2 2021	Weekly releases of the Strategic Plan in the School News Sheet for the whole community.	All Teaching Staff
1/6/21	Mid Year Reporting – Parent /Teacher Interviews	All Teaching Staff
Meeting as needed	NCCD- Case Studies in relation to NCCD funding guides	Martin, Lee and Primary Class Teachers
12/7/21	Teachers Meeting – Covid 19 Planning Discussions preparing for remote learning and learning packages Teachers IT Training for Remote Online Learning Delivery	All Teaching Staff
16/7/21 Term 3 & 4 2021	Ongoing Covid communication with the school community led by School Principal Martin Buckmaster	Martin
15/9/21	Whole School Community Slide Show - “Spring It On” Covid response to our Spring Festival	All Staff and Community
4/10/21	Teachers Meeting and Planning Day Term 4 Adjustments to Programs to accommodate the impact of remote learning	All Teaching Staff
11/11/21	Council member meeting with College members to review risk assessment policy.	All Teaching Staff
10/12/21	End of year Staff Social (integral for team building)	All Staff

Individual Teachers	Professional Learning 2021
<p>Martin Buckmaster Principal (0.2) Chaplain (0.4) &amp; Numeracy and Literacy Support (0.2)</p>	<p>17/1/2021 – 21/1/2021 Steiner Class Teacher Curriculum Intensive at Glenaeon School (via Zoom). Lecture series 2021 Weekly College Meetings – Readings, lectures pedagogical discussions and child studies. 15/2/2021- 16/2/2021 Adjusting Teaching During Covid-19 1/4/2021 First Aid – First Response LawSense Vaccinations, Flexible Work, Staff Mental Health 14/09/2021 Supporting Teachers – Pedagogical Section Australia 3/10/2021 2/11/2021 Information evening for parents of children transitioning to Class 1 in 2022.</p>
<p>Freya Baska Class Teacher (until 23/6/21)</p>	<p>17/1/2021 – 21/1/2021 Steiner Class Teacher Curriculum Intensive at Glenaeon School (via Zoom). 2021 Weekly College Meetings – Readings, lectures pedagogical discussions and child studies. 9/2/2021 Parents and Carers Information Evening. 15/2/2021- 16/2/2021 Adjusting Teaching During Covid-19 1/4/2021 First Aid – First Response</p>
<p>Stephanie Cassin College member / Class Teacher</p>	<p>17/1/2021 – 21/1/2021 Steiner Class Teacher Curriculum Intensive at Glenaeon School (via Zoom). 20/01/2021 Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder (Dr Tony Atwood online course) 5 hours. 24/01/2021 Making it a Success – Teaching and Behaviour Support Strategies for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (Sue Larkey online course) 5 hours. 2021 Weekly College Meetings – Readings, lectures pedagogical discussions and child studies. 9/2/2021 Parents and Carers Information Evening. 15/2/2021- 16/2/2021 Adjusting Teaching During Covid-19 1/4/2021 First Aid – First Response</p>
<p>Julie Humphreys Class Teacher</p>	<p>17/1/2021 – 21/1/2021 Steiner Class Teacher Curriculum Intensive at Glenaeon School (via Zoom). 2021 Weekly College Meetings – Readings, lectures pedagogical discussions and child studies. 10/2/2021 Parents and Carers Information Evening. 15/2/2021- 16/2/2021 Adjusting Teaching During Covid-19 1/4/2021 First Aid – First Response 2/11/2021 Information evening for parents of children transitioning to Class 1 in 2022. 14/12/2021 Curriculum changes NSW English and Mathematics for Stage 1 - 2hrs Online NESA course</p>
<p>Francine O'Dea College member / Kindy teacher</p>	<p>17/1/2021 – 21/1/2021 Steiner Class Teacher Curriculum Intensive at Glenaeon School (via Zoom). Lecture series</p>

	<p>2021 Weekly College Meetings – Readings, lectures pedagogical discussions and child studies.</p> <p>15/2/2021- 16/2/2021 Adjusting Teaching During Covid-19</p> <p>18/2/2021 Parents and Carers Information Evening</p> <p>27/3/2021 Regional Meeting for Early Childhood:- Focus on children's drawings</p> <p>1/4/2021 First Aid – First Response</p> <p>29/5/2021 Regional Meeting for Early Childhood zoom</p> <p>4/7/21 to 6/7/21 Early Childhood Online Professional Learning - Vital Years 2021</p> <p>“Sensing into the Stream of Life” Lectures &amp; Workshop</p> <p>11/9/2021 Regional Meeting for Early Childhood Teachers – review and discussion of Lectures for Vital Years</p> <p>2/11/2021 Online Information evening for parents of children transitioning to Class 1 in 2022.</p> <p>14/12/21 Curriculum changes NSW English and Mathematics for Early Stage 1 - 2hrs Online NESA course</p>
--	--

## Teaching Standards

For 2021

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	11
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

### 2021 Reporting Area 6

#### Workforce composition, including Indigenous

At any one time the workforce composition in 2021 consisted of 12 teaching staff (a full time equivalent of 5.8), 1 teaching staff/administration staff (Principal - a full-time equivalent of 0.8), 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.



## 2021 Reporting Area 7

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

#### Student attendance rates

During 2021 the average student attendance rate (across the grades K-6) for the year was 92,5% which is slightly higher than the daily attendance for 2020. From 14 July 2021 (beginning of Term 3), students were again encouraged to self isolate when the COVID-19 pandemic escalated again and were marked absent. All absences due to self isolation/remote learning were recorded with an “F” (Flexible learning) reason until 25 October (when most children returned to school). An average of 20 students still attended the school during this time as their parents were essential workers. Attendance was also slightly lower over the year due to mandatory exclusion from school if a child had any flu like symptoms. In previous years, a child might still attend school if they had very mild symptoms. Attendance is also generally lower across most of the grades in Term 2/early Term 3 which 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:

<b>Year Level</b>	<b>Attendance Rate %</b>
Kindergarten	94
Class 1	92.9
Class 2	93.6
Class 3	92.4
Class 4	89.1
Class 5	94.9
Class 6	90.3

#### 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 2021

### 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 2021	

## 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

## **2021 Reporting Area 8**

### **Post school destinations (for secondary schools only)**

N/A

## **2021 Reporting Area 9**

### **Enrolment policies and characteristics of the student body**

#### **Student Population**

- During 2021 Blue Mountains Steiner School had up to 144 students enrolled from Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten (Sessional Kindergarten) through to Class 6 over the year (82 students in K-6, and by the end of 2021, 62 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 2021, there have been no students enrolled with differing special needs and seven 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.

## **2021 Reporting Area 10**

### **School policies**

#### **Policies for**

- Student welfare
- Discipline
- Reporting Serious Complaints Policy

#### **A. Policies for Student Welfare 2021**

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 2021.

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](mailto: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

## Compliance

The College of Teachers has agreed to comply with section 105 of the *Education Act 2004*. These are the responsibilities of all staff on the following:

- roles and responsibilities in relation to suspension, exclusion or specific circumstances relating to
- Requirements for supervision
- Alternatives for continuing the child's education

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

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 ie., 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	<b>Student adheres to school rules. Student respects the rights of self and others, is co-operative and self-controlled.</b>	<b>The aim here is to encourage and acknowledge the student.</b> Positively reinforce behaviour with appropriate comments and specific feedback.	Involve colleagues in recognition of student's achievements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• assemblies</li> <li>• positive behaviours noted</li> </ul>
1	<b>Is involved in minor disruptions of low intensity and frequency.</b> 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.	<b>The aim here is to make child/ren <i>conscious</i> of error and redirect into appropriate behaviour</b> 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. Clarify 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	<b>Infringes the rules and rights of others or displays</b>	<b>At this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again</b>	Duty/Specialist teacher discusses with class teacher behaviour of child.

	<b>behaviours at a higher frequency or intensity than level 1.</b> 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	<b>the responsible, respectful way to behave in class.</b> 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
<b>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.</b>			
3	<b>Seriously and regularly breaches the rights of others or displays behaviour at a higher intensity or behaviour is continuous</b> 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	<b>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.</b>  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	<b>Seriously and continually violates</b>		Meeting called between Class Teacher, Principal, Parent and



	<b>other's rights</b> 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	<b>Fifth report may result in</b> Immediate suspension for three days. Exclusion from particular class or activity may also be considered.  <b>Sixth report will result in</b> 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	<b>Student adheres to school rules. Student respects the rights of self and others, is co-operative and self-controlled.</b>	Positively reinforce behaviour with appropriate comments and specific feedback	Involve colleagues in recognition of children's achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>assemblies</li> <li>positive behaviours noted</li> </ul>
1	<b>Involved in minor disruptions of low intensity and frequency.</b> For example: rough play unfair play pushing out of bounds exclusion teasing put downs	<b>The aim here is to make child/ren <i>conscious</i> of error and redirect into appropriate behaviour</b> 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	<b>Infringes the rules and rights of others or displays behaviours at a higher frequency or intensity than level 1</b> e.g. teasing, exclusion, cliques, continual fighting, throwing sticks, stones, verbal abuse, rudeness, rudeness to teachers and staff, swearing	<b>At this level the child must face the consequences of their actions and learn again the responsible, respectful way to behave in the playground</b> 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. At this point the child will be

	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>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>
<b>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.</b>			
3	<p><b>Seriously and regularly breaches the rights of others or displays behaviour at a higher intensity than level 2.</b> 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 vandalism acts in a way that otherwise threatens the good order of the school or the safety or wellbeing of others</p>	<p><b>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.</b></p> <p>Child/ren automatically lose playtime, sit with duty teacher. Parents notified may be asked to collect child immediately 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><b>Seriously and continually violates other's rights</b></p> <p>Violent behaviour, verbal or physical (see Violent &amp; Aggressive behaviour policy). Showing insufficient signs of change despite all efforts at seeking a resolution of the inappropriate behaviour</p>	<p><b>Fifth report may result in</b> Immediate suspension for three days. Exclusion from particular class or activity may also be considered.</p> <p><b>Sixth report may result in</b> 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>

	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 \_\_\_\_\_

---

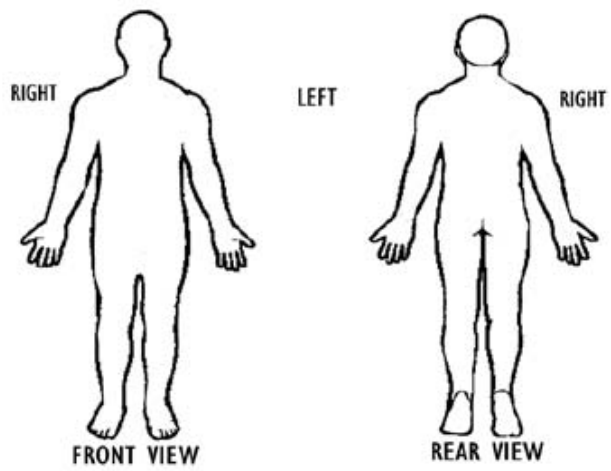
---

---

Notes \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

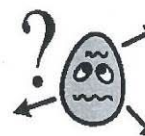
# **(B1) STAGE 1**      **Reflection for Student Who HAS BEEN Harmed**

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?



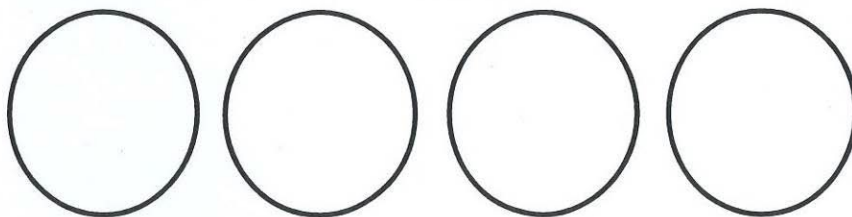
3. What has been the saddest thing for you?





## **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?

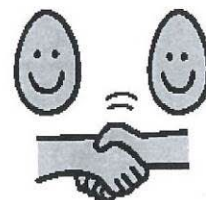
---

---

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?**

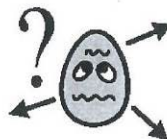
---

---

---

---

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?**

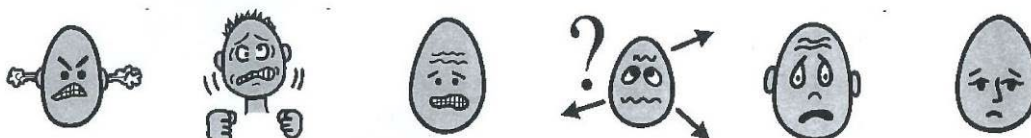
---

---

---

---

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 \_\_\_\_\_

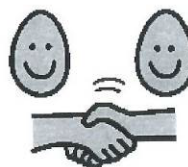
What have you learned?

---

---

---

---



# **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](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
- Reach Out! [www.reachout.com.au](http://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 2021**

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](mailto: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 2021**

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 2019. The 'Student Grievance Policy', drafted in 2005 and last revised in 2019, 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 2021 were last revised in 2019.

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](mailto: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.

# Blue Mountains Steiner School

## Policies and Procedures



### Grievance Policy and Procedures: Parents

<b>Policy Principle</b>	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.
<b>Policy Statement</b>	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.

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

**Other policies that may be relevant**

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

**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 teacher 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 School Chaplain 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 the School Chaplain 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 the School Chaplain, 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 the School Chaplain 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.

## 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, School Chaplain 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.

# Blue Mountains Steiner School

## Policies and Procedures



### 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 Chaplain.
- 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

# Blue Mountains Steiner School

## Policies and Procedures



### Grievance Policy & Procedures: Staff

<b>Policy Principle</b>	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.
<b>Policy Statement</b>	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:

- Conflict between staff
- Staff issues relating to management

**What is excluded?** This policy does not apply to:

- Staff performance
- Child protection issues
- Criminal matters

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

**Other policies that may be relevant**

- 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



# 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.

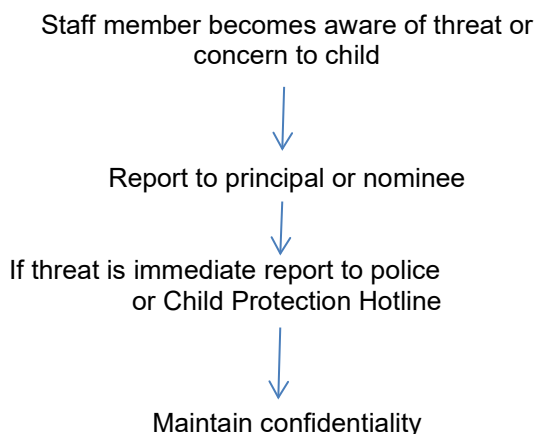
### 3. STAFF

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.

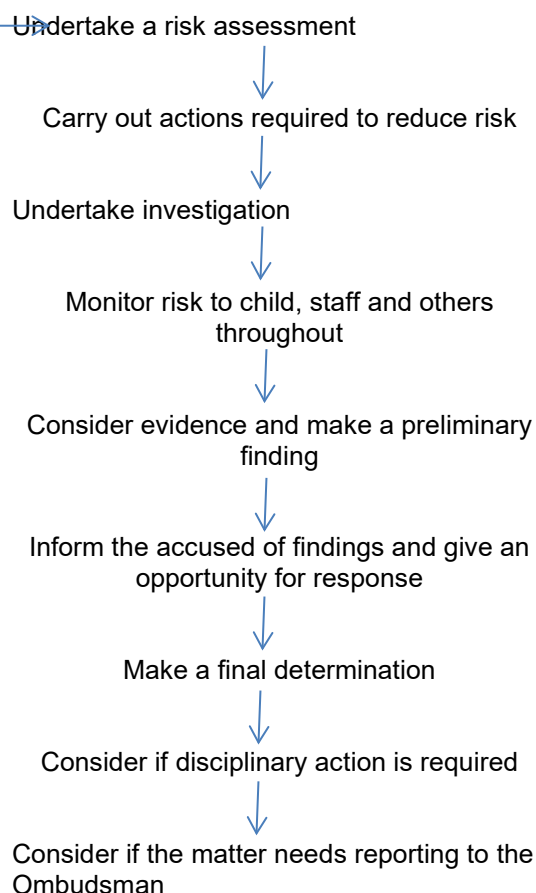
All staff must be aware of their mandatory obligation to report suspected risk of significant harm, and reportable conduct and of the procedures for doing so.

## 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**

- a) 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;
- b) Must receive and assess notifications from Blue Mountains Steiner School concerning reportable conduct or reportable convictions;
- c) Is required to oversee or monitor the conduct of investigations by Blue Mountains Steiner School into allegations of reportable or reportable convictions;
- d) 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;
- e) 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.

## **2021 Reporting Area 11**

See School Improvement Plan included in Reporting Area 1

## **2021 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 school's 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 school's outdoor education program.

Martin Buckmaster  
School Chaplain

## 2021 Reporting Area 13

### Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

#### Parents

The 2021 Annual BMSS Parent Survey was developed during April and May 2021, based on the previous parent survey. It was sent to approximately 40-45 parent groups at the beginning of June. The survey remained open throughout the winter break and closed on 8 July 2021. The survey covered 6 areas of interest, and included 79 questions, with room for comment:

Section 1 of 6: Playgroup and Preschool Parent Communication and Support

Section 2 of 6: Primary School Parent Communication and Support

Section 3 of 6: Primary School Programs

Section 4 of 6: Teacher Quality

Section 5 of 6: School Leadership and Management

Section 6 of 6: Overall School Experience

33 respondents took the time to engage with most questions in the survey. This is fair considering NSW was about to head into a serious COVID19 lockdown and parents and caregivers may have had other things to consider.

Please note:

**Low numbers** denote the respondent **Agrees** (ie this is a positive response)

**High numbers** denote the respondent **Disagrees** (ie this would be considered an area of improvement)

Overall mostly positive feedback from parents and caregivers across the 6 sections should be cause for celebration. Some constructive feedback around suggested improvements that can be made is always welcome.

This survey was created and responded to before the full impact of the COVID19 lockdowns had been felt.

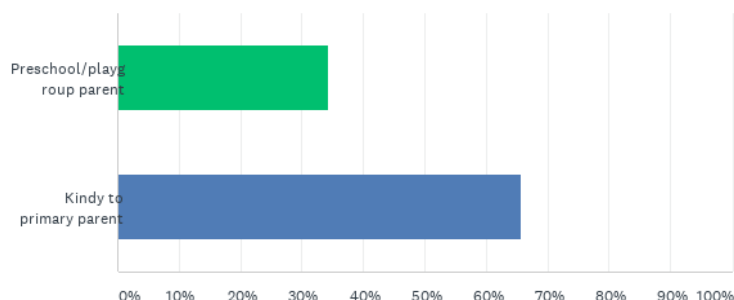


## Section 1: Playgroup and Preschool Parent Communication and Support

### Q1. Parents and caregivers were asked to identify which cohort they belonged to:

Preschool/Playgroup	34.38%
Kindy to Primary	65.63%

Q1 I am a:



6 preschool/playgroup parents responded

*Note: The lower the number the more positive the answer, eg 0% indicates **completely happy**, 100% indicates **unhappy** when the answer asks for agree/disagree.*

### Q2. Of those who responded everyone felt their child/children and family feel included in playgroup/preschool community.

Q3. Comment box feedback:

- Definite increase in all staff actively welcoming/communicating with us, rather than some staff welcoming and others not.

### Q4. One respondent not contributing as much as they would like - not sure if this is due to lack of time or feeling excluded.

Q5. Comment box feedback:

- I wish I had the time to devote more and to get to know more parents
- I wish there were more opportunities to contribute. I really don't like the experience of dropping off my child and picking him up without further engagement.

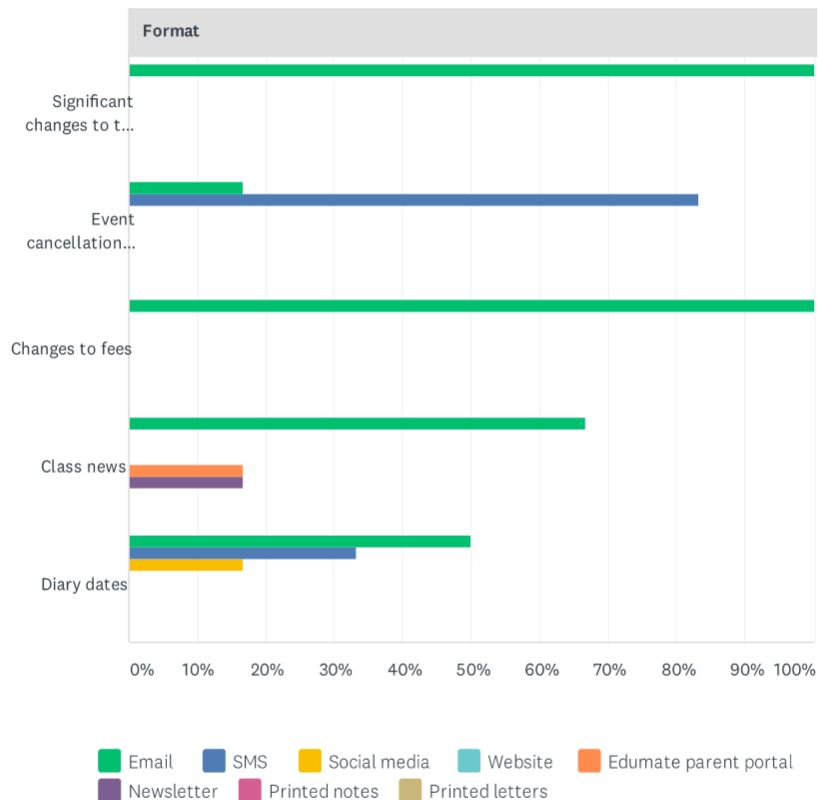
### Q6. All respondents feel well-informed about playgroup/preschool matters.

Q7. Comment box feedback:

- Definite improvement with this, but there seems to be several ways of communicating special events which I sometimes don't see until the last minute....

Q8 We want to improve the ways we communicate with you. Here are some examples of the types of things we need to communicate from time to time. Please select your preference for the ways you would like to receive this information:

Answered: 6 Skipped: 27



**Q9. All respondents feel satisfied with the relationship they have with their child/children's educators.**

**Q10. Comment box feedback:**

- Beautiful educators who we love
- Feels like an increased sense of agency and engagement with staff, which results in increased positive active engagement with kids.

**Q11. All respondents feel satisfied with the relationship educators have with their child/children.**

**Q12. Comment box feedback:**

- The educators provide very sensitive care to the children, I feel very confident my children are well cared for.
- Some information about my child doesn't seem to be shared consistently with all staff.

**Q13+14. Most respondents feel extra activities and festivals are an important part of the playgroup/preschool programs and are happy to pay for these small events.**

**Q15. Of the 5 respondents 3 suggest they will not be taking advantage of the 40% discount to continue on to K-6** - question to ask ourselves: is this the right question? Are they not taking advantage of the 40% discount because they:

- a) don't need it for financial reasons, or
- b) are not continuing on anyway - ie is there a better way to ask this question so we get the information we need.

**Q16. 100% are unaware of the 24/7 online feedback form.**

**Q17. How might we better support your family?**

- We want to continue into primary but logistics of transport and after school care options may limit this.

**Q18. How might you like to contribute to the school?**

- Advisement on what parent support of event support may be needed if needed
- More child/parent/teacher community events or working bees etc.

**Q19. Do you have any further feedback you wish to share?**

- We love BMSS. We would love all our children to attend but fee schedules may limit this option. However, we understand that as a private school it may not always be possible to lower fees The kindy discount is amazing, but to continue into grade 1 when we have multiple children may be a challenge.
- I've not been made aware of the discount mentioned above, and it would have been useful to know this when considering schools.

## Section 2: Primary School Parent Communication and Support

**Q21. (or 1 of the Primary section) All 13 respondents feel “very to quite positive” about being included in school community**

Q22. Comment box feedback:

- Everyone knows the kids and the students look out for each other.

**Q23. All respondents feel they are contributing to the school as a parent as much as they want to.**

Q24. Comment box feedback:

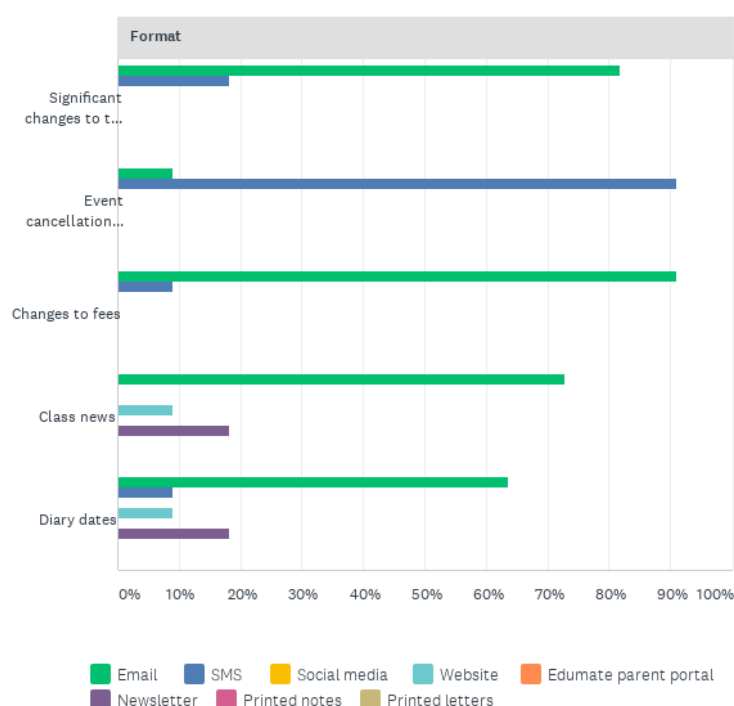
- I contribute and get involved where I can. Sometimes I'd like to do more.
- Probably more than I can spare but it feels good to be helping at the school and improving things.
- More small opportunities to help out would be good.
- Difficult to break into the volunteer clique! Seems like a few people control access to volunteer opportunities.

**Q25. One respondent does not feel well-informed.**

Q26. Comment box feedback:

- Weekly newsletter is excellent and informative. Texts, edumate are all a bonus to stay informed.
- Mainly through being involved.

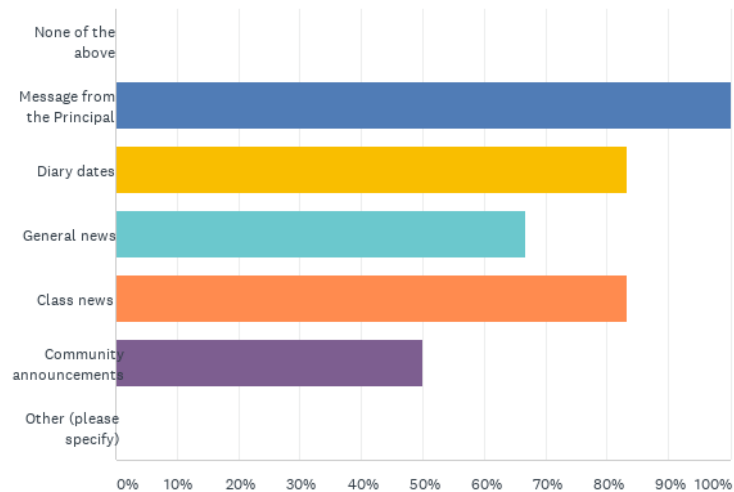
Q27 We want to improve the ways we communicate with you. Here are some examples of the types of things we need to communicate from time to time. Please select your preference for the ways you would like to receive this information:



**Q28. Awareness of online feedback form:**

- Approximately 40% aware; 60% unaware.

**Q29 Which sections of our newsletter, if any, do you read regularly?**



**Q30. Comment box feedback:**

- Communication is done well.
- More advance notice with any changes to staffing or timing (eg kindy finishing later). More comms about how I can support or supplement my child's in-class learning.
- We are extremely happy with the school and every aspect - thank you for your amazing work!

## Section 3: Primary School Programs

**Q31. Most children enjoy going to school each day; one response indicated 50% agreement.**

**Q32. Most children enjoy learning new languages.**

**Q33. Most enjoy music and performance.**

**Q34. Most enjoy learning craft the most.**

**Q35/36. Art and painting is also popular as is outdoor education**

Q37. "I would like to see more..." Comment box feedback:

- Organised sport eg. carnivals
- Consistent 3/4 teacher/s
- Outdoor activities
- Children presenting small items to their class eg. present a project to class, to practice
- Dance and movement
- Woodwork and clay lessons.

**Q38. Most feel well-informed about their child's activities and educational programs at BMSS.**

Q39. Comment box feedback:

- Would be good to have some general information so we can support our kids at home. Or even ask about what they are learning. Would be good if primary could provide brief overview like kindy does.

**Q40. Most feel their child's learning is fully supported; one respondent 50% agree/disagree.**

Q41. Comment box feedback:

- I try to understand where our children are at so we can support them in useful ways
- Strongly agree here. I see the work the staff put in and appreciate it greatly
- I feel like there could be more done to support children to challenge themselves and step outside what they think they can do or are interested in so they can discover new things about themselves.

**Q42. BMSS offers a positive learning environment for their children.**

Q43. Comment box feedback:

- Absolutely! The kids love going to school and are settled and confident in themselves and their abilities.

**Q44. I feel BMSS offers a good balance between safety and individual risk-taking for my child/children.**

Average rating 12/100 (*Remember: 1=Yes, 100=No*)

Q45. Comment box feedback:

- Definitely a good balance, particularly with the bush environment.
- I am guessing on this one.
- I think the bush setting allows that balanced learning but I think my child would benefit from being encouraged to take risks and extend themselves.

**Q46. BMSS offers an appropriate Steiner-based curriculum for my child/children**

Average rating 11/100 (*Remember: 1=Yes, 100=No*)

Q47. Comment box feedback:

- The curriculum is great and it is also great to have teachers that know when to reinterpret archetypal stories that can reinforce outdated gender norms and stereotypes.

**Q48. I am happy with current class sizes and student/teacher ratios.**

Average rating 13/100.

Q49. Comment box feedback:

- Great to be small enough that everyone knows each other's names but big enough to be well-resourced and sustainable financially.

## Section 4: Teacher Quality

### **Q50. I feel I have access to my child's teacher when I need it:**

Average rating 19/100. (One response gave 72, another 54 ie not happy)

Q51. Comment box feedback:

- Strongly agree here. Comms has been great.
- I think due to health of Freya, staff changes in Year 3/4 and COVID changes so parents don't pick up from the class room, I haven't had incidental contact with the teacher or known who to direct my questions or enquiries.
- The teaching staff are exceptional and inspirational. Our family is very lucky to have our children take my daughter wonderful people.

### **Q52. My child's/children's teachers are of a high standard.**

Strong agreement.

Q53. Feedback comment box:

- There have been times when a few worries have come up because of the instability of teachers and availability. But all teachers have always given their best.
- Julie is a star. Thank you.
- I don't know.

### **Q54. Strong agreement teachers are supportive and caring.**

Q56. Teachers and staff cater to my child's/children's individual educational needs.

Q57. Comment box feedback:

- Very impressed on this one.
- Really impressed with how Steiner has accommodated my child's learning needs.

### **Q58. Teachers communicate regularly with me about my child's/children's learning.**

Average rating 21/100

Q59. Comment box feedback:

- Primary: Only through newsletters, parent teacher and info evenings. Kindy: more so due to face-to-face drop off and pick up.

### **Q60. My child is encouraged to participate in all school activities, both inside and outside the classroom.**

Average rating response: 14/20

Q61. Comment box feedback:

- My answer mainly related to outdoor education and sport, sounds like my child participates only when they want to.

### **Q62. My child is nurtured and challenged in a diverse range of areas and activities.**

Average rating response 13/20

Q63. Comment box feedback:

- Nurtured absolutely, challenged to extend themselves, I'm not so sure.



## Section 5: School Leadership and Management

### **Q64. Bullying and student discipline matters are dealt with effectively:**

Average response rating: 28/100

Q65. Comment box feedback:

- I haven't come across any of yet so I am not sure how it is dealt with.
- Martin is trusted by both children and parents. He takes an active role in addressing concerns.

Unsure, I haven't had any experience with this.

My child experienced bullying earlier this year as a new student, and I don't feel that anyone checked in with her.

### **Q66. My concerns are taken seriously by the school's leadership team.**

Average rating response: 10/100

Q67. Comment box feedback:

The principal and teachers are available to discuss any concerns and issues.

I haven't had comment yet.

### **Q68. There is effective leadership at the school.**

Average rating response: 4/10

Q69. Comment box feedback:

- The last year or two has seen a big improvement in the leadership of the school. It's made a very happy difference.
- Martin has been a noticeably strong leader in my view. Well done and thanks.
- I think it is getting there and will be even better when Martin can have more time purely in the principal role. Martin has changed the leadership culture and team environment at the school, for the better!

## Section 6: Overall School Experience

### **Q70. I am satisfied with the quality of education my children are receiving at BMSS.**

Average rating response: 12/100

Q71. No comment feedback.

### **Q72. My child is happy at BMSS**

Average response rating: 5/100

Q73. No comment feedback.

### **Q74. Do you intend to continue your child's educational journey with us at BMSS next year?**

- Yes 82%
- No 9%
- Unsure 9%

### **Q75. What factors were important to you when choosing BMSS for your child's education?**

- Bush environment, Steiner philosophy, small school, simplicity, smaller classes.
- Nurturing environment, good methods for teaching. Individualising the teachings. Good peers and community.
- Children are nurtured and supported to learn and grow, friendships are strong and not toxic. Child safety and protection is taken seriously.
- Quality of schooling and leadership
- Nurturing and engaging teaching staff. A culture that values differences and sees the child for who they are. The food policy is also a large factor in keeping my children at BMSS, I like that there is a focus on nutrition.
- A nurturing and supportive school environment.
- I wanted my child to feel good about going to school.
- Emotional support and catering to our children's needs.
- Small school Nature-based tech-free.

### **Q76. If you have chosen to go elsewhere, what factors contributed to your decision?**

- Our child will trial the new class teacher but it will depend on how it goes with a new teacher, as the most important thing is that our child is happy and supported by the teacher.

### **Q77. Would you like to discuss any of the issues raised in this survey (or any other educational or social issues) with a BMSS staff member?**

- Yes 22.22%
- No 77.78%

### **Q78. Comment box feedback:**

- I think greater lead time in communicating changes, permission and payments at the school will reduce frustration. I think there is such a wonderful rhythm and ritual at the school for the children and I wonder if thought could be given as to how that ritual and rhythm approach could be applied to welcome, transition and celebrate parents and staff, entering changing or contributing to the school.
- We are very happy with the school generally :) great work BMSS!!!!

### **Q79. I am happy to be contacted to provide a testimonial for use in school marketing activities.**

- Yes 70%
- No 30%

## **Student**

In response to 2021 student survey results, the school implemented the following:

- Giant Swing installed over the Christmas holidays.
- New swings installed in Kindergarten space
- More sporting equipment was purchased
- Kindergarten – Class 6 went on a excursion to Mount Tomah for Peer Support and whole school community building
- Negotiation for more variety of games and multi-age opportunities for inclusive ball court use.
- More netball hoops installed
- More cubby building areas allocated and used
- Continuation of the Gardening program to all classes

## **Teachers**

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

- Work on improving whole of school communications plan
- Work on leadership capabilities within College
- Whole school literacy/numeracy that is sequential and systematic
- Updated Policies and Procedures
- More support on the ground, when dealing with difficult behaviours
- Ongoing training for skills-sharing with colleagues
- A more sustainable workload

The Teaching Staff are committed to regular Faculty meetings. Extensive work has also been done in College of Teachers meetings including bringing weekly reading materials and lecture content. Regular Child Observations have also been conducted. This has deepened the pedagogical understanding and increased our focus professional learning.

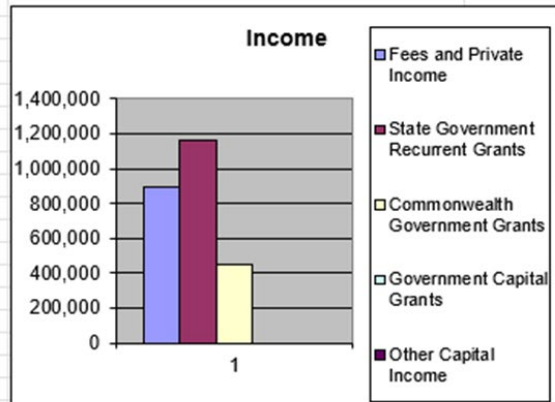
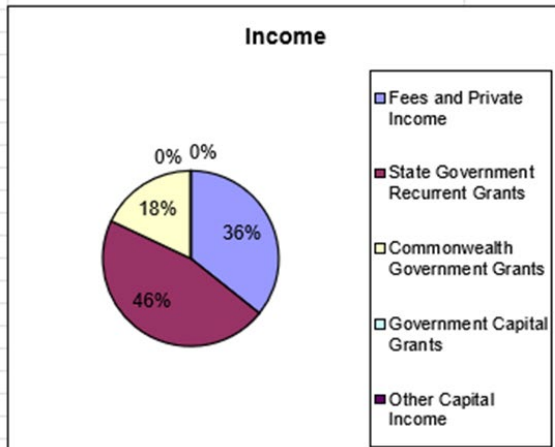
Overall teachers' feel acknowledged and supported and love working at BMSS.

Overall, the level of satisfaction from members of school community was high in 2021, despite the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and the hardships of home learning.

## 2021 Reporting Area 14

### Summary financial information

<b>Recurrent Income</b>		
Fees and Private Income	897,075	35.74%
State Government Recurrent Grants	1,161,783	46.29%
Commonwealth Government Grants	451,013	17.97%
Government Capital Grants		0.00%
Other Capital Income		0.00%
	<b>2,509,871</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



<b>Expenditure</b>		
Salaries, Allowances and Related Expenditure	1,523,740	70.55%
Non-Salary Expenditure	635,981	29.45%
Capital Expenditure		0.00%
	<b>2,159,721</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

