**MILC**

**Child Safety and Wellbeing and Engagement Policy**

**Help for non-English speakers:**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact MILC.

**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our MILC community understand:

* our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students;
* support available to students and families.

MILC is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive MILC culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. MILC acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support MILC to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive environment consistent with our values and philosophy.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all school activities, including excursions.

**POLICY**

**MILC Profile, Vision Mission and Values Statement**

**Profile**

Melbourne Intercultural Learning Centre (MILC) is a registered school boarding premises which provides services for overseas students and local international students to develop their language skills and successfully integrate into Australian education and Australian culture. We run a variety of programmes for overseas students including High School Preparation (HSP) program taught by International House staff to prepare students for integration into Australian schools. We also run programmes by other accredited providers to help other students residing with their families or in approved homestay under Visa 500 successfully understand and integrate into Australian education and culture.

Our modern premises provide outstanding accommodation and facilities for all students. We offer a full boarding experience to students, including an excellent excursion programme.

MILC staff are dedicated to the safety and wellbeing of all students. MILC has a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse and is committed to promoting child safety, children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse. Under Ministerial Order 1359 MILC has implemented child safety standards and to accommodate and take the needs of all children (including but not limited to, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable) into account when creating a child safe environment. All of our people, including contractors, are required to hold a current Working with Children Check or current VIT Registration.

**Our Vision**

To provide strong academic, linguistic and intellectual preparation for U18 students, while helping them to adjust to Australian society in a safe, secure and appropriate living and learning environment.

**Our Mission**

That education should take place in a fully inclusive environment with equal opportunities for all and that all students should learn to value cultural differences. Our school strives to be at the centre of the local community, with positive and effective links to the wider and global communities.

That students will develop valuable social skills, meet new friends and build relationships.

To provide a continuum of education, encouraging students to progress through the Australian education system, transitioning from MILC to a secondary school to higher education or vocational qualifications, or between providers.

**The Path**

Achieving our mission calls on the deep engagement and purposeful interaction of three key partners in our learning community: our students; our teachers and support staff; our families.

We will work together to build a sense of belonging and connection - among our students; among our staff; between our students and staff, our school and families, our school and the wider community; and, importantly, with our ever-changing global community. We will provide learning opportunities that connect learners with each other, ideas, people, beliefs and values. We will prepare young adults with the compassion, self-belief, knowledge, skills and desire to lead happy, productive lives and to make a positive difference wherever they may travel.

**Our Values**

We have a commitment to:

**Care** - valuing self, each other and our environment, nurturing healthy relationships

**Respect** - embracing diversity and individual differences, respecting others’ contributions

**Empathy** - understanding and caring about another person’s feelings and taking action to help

**Excellence** - being aspirational, working to achieve one's best

**Responsibility** - fairness; self-management; accepting civic and self-responsibility

**Environmental Context**

MILC has a broad socio-economic demographic and widely diverse cultural setting.

MILC responds to needs of new and emerging communities, changing demands and demographics.

1. **Wellbeing and Engagement strategies**

MILC has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

The whole of school strategies of MILC to promote positive behaviour and inclusion are as follows:

* high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and guardians;
* prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing;
* creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers;
* all students to participate and feel valued.

**Pedagogy and Engagement**

English language teaching, via accredited providers such as International House, is based on Communicative Language Teaching methodology. The central principles that surround this approach to language teaching are based around students being very active and engaged in the classroom. Lessons are ‘student-centred’ which allows them to participate fully and discover English with their teacher facilitating this process. In order to be successful, students must be motivated through encouragement, and by engaging our students we achieve very positive learning outcomes.

On all of our English programmes, students will be working on improving their language knowledge. This involves working on vocabulary, grammar and functional language, broadening passive and active ability with the English language system. In combination with this, students will also improve skills in language – speaking, listening, reading and writing. As a result, our English programmes will be comprehensive, enabling students to better function in an English speaking environment.

**4. Identifying students in need of support**

MILC is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. Boarding staff and teachers play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing.

MILC will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

* personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled; medical forms submitted upon enrolment (including management plan);
* attendance records / data;
* academic performance;
* observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation; and
* engagement with families.

**Student rights and responsibilities**

All members of our MILC community have a right to experience a safe and supportive environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and guardians treat each other with respect and dignity.

Students have the right to:

* participate fully in their education;
* feel safe, secure and happy at school;
* learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation;
* express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

* participate fully in their educational Language program;
* display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the MILC community; and
* respect the right of others to learn.

For more details, please refer to MILC Student Code of Conduct.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of MILC management. For further information about raising a complaint or concern, please refer to MILC Student Complaints Policy.

**COMMUNICATION**

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

* Available publicly on our school’s website;
* Included in staff induction processes; and
* Included as annual reference in a newsletter.