What is School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)?

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support is an approach being introduced to help teach our students improved social and communication skills. These are based on Mill Park Primary School's core values of Respect, Integrity, Compassion and Excellence.

Evidence shows that teaching, recognising, acknowledging and rewarding positive behaviour helps reinforce these social skills and is an important step in our student's education. We also know that social and communication skills are learnt and each child will learn these abilities at their own pace.

You can help support your child's learning by being aware of SWPBS and practising these strategies at home.

What is the purpose of SWPBS and why we are using it?

SWPBS pilot projects were conducted and evaluated in 20 schools across Victoria in 2008-2011. SWPBS has also been successfully implemented across Tasmania, New South Wales and Queensland.

The main outcomes reported were:
- a calmer and more constructive school environment
- improved student social skills overall as a result of a common approach to managing student behaviour
- enhanced staff to student respect and positive relationships, underpinned by improved staff awareness and attitudes towards student wellbeing concerns, and the adoption of new strategies to manage anti-social student behaviour
- improved staff morale, confidence and teamwork
- improved student understanding about the type of behaviour that is required and increased motivation to behave appropriately in various contexts
- overall decrease in the incidence of extreme negative student behaviour, with many schools reporting the de-escalation of critical incidents and reduced office discipline referrals
- improved learning environments with flow on benefits for student learning (University of Melbourne, 2011).

The central message of SWPBS is that to change problem behaviour in students, school leadership and teachers must understand the functional interaction between behaviour and the learning environment.

Finally, school leadership and teachers must work positively rather than negatively to create school environments and cultures that support the use of positive social behaviours. By explicitly teaching the expectations, monitoring students and rewarding positive behaviours, we aim to reduce negative student behaviours.

Guiding Principles

SWPBS is guided by the following principles of behaviour:
- behaviour is learned and can be taught
- environments can be created to change behaviour
- understanding the relationship between physiological factors and environmental variables is a critical feature when supporting students with behavioural, social, emotional and mental health issues
- assessing and manipulating environmental factors can predictably affect occurrences of behaviour
- adult behaviour must change in a consistent and systematic manner
- systems of support are necessary for both students and adults.

What does SWPBS look like at Mill Park Primary School?

All students will be explicitly taught the behaviour the teacher expects to see (see Student Matrix in this booklet). This can be done throughout the day.
- Teach the behaviours as we would teach academics or any other skill.
- Talk about the expected behaviours and discuss why it is important.
- Demonstrate and model the social skills.
- Acknowledge and provide positive feedback.
- Reflect on what we need to change to ensure the student is successful.

Reward System

A whole school reward system has been implemented for reinforcing expected behaviour. Encouragement, guidance and rewards are helpful for students to build their skills. Rewards help to build a predictable, positive and social culture in our school.

By rewarding positive behaviour students will:
- Be motivated by rewards they can choose themselves.
- Remain engaged when they have a positive incentive.
- Be self-motivated to earn a reward.
- See their success.
- Receive positive feedback.
- Be helped to reinforce positive behaviours and expectations.