# STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

## PURPOSE

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

(a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
(b) expectations for positive student behaviour
(c) support available to students and families
(d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Merbein P-10 College 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 school culture helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

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

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

## CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

## POLICY

1. School profile

## 1 School profile statement

Merbein P-10 was established in 2010, combining 3 Primary Schools and a Secondary College, with strong histories and traditions dating back 100 years. The College now has 1 campus situated in Merbein in North West Victoria. It is a community College set amongst urban, horticultural and dry land farming districts of Sunraysia. Merbein is one of 19 schools in the local educational network. Current enrolment is **770** students from prep to year 10.

At Merbein P-10 we know that continuous learning and the best practice approach to teaching is the key to achieving

the best learning outcomes for children. Therefore professional learning forms a regular part of teacher's weekly meeting schedule.

The school has strong connections with the community which enhances students' educational outcomes and engagement.

The college offers a diverse curriculum based on The Victorian Curriculum with a focus on literacy and numeracy. Other key programs in our college include the high use of ICT to support learning and environmental awareness programs. We offer an extensive 'camps' program from year prep to 10 which is closely linked to The Victorian Curriculum. Personal development programs are an integral part of our curriculum and include, peer support and buddy systems.

The performing arts and sporting programs are other features of our college with state representation in both of these areas.

## 2. School values, philosophy and vision

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive and our school community expects that our values of Quality, Respect and Responsibility at all times are reflected in the way we interact and work together.

**Our vision:**

Is to provide a safe, supportive learning community that enables students to become life-long learners and socially responsible citizens.

## 3. Our Values

- **Quality**
  Seek to accomplish worthy and admirable deeds, try hard, pursue excellence in all endeavours.
- **Responsibility**
  Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment.
- **Respect** Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view, property and physical and social wellbeing

## 4. Engagement strategies

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

To realise our vision, our school has in place a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in the school. We recognise that some students, as a group or as individuals may need extra social, emotional or educational support to flourish at school, and so we will put in place strategies to identify these students and provide them with the support they need. The School works collaboratively with students and parents/ carers to establish fair and respectful behaviour policies and practices, based on the school's values, expected social competencies and positive peer relationships. There are also intervention strategies in place to address inappropriate behaviours which can negatively impact on the learning environment of the self and others.

The universal (whole-school), targeted (group-specific) and individual engagement strategies used in our school are outlined in **Appendix 2**.

## 5. Universal

- The school collaboratively develops and implements a fair and respectful whole-school engagement and behaviour management approach.
- The school's curriculum includes the explicit teaching of pro-social values and behaviours to enable students to acquire knowledge and skills, value diversity and build a culture of learning, community and engagement.
- The school promotes active student participation and provides students with a sense of ownership of their environment.
- The school will support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners.
- The school promotes active 'student participation' as an avenue for improving student outcomes and facilitating school change.
- The school will establish social/emotional and educational support for vulnerable students and monitor and evaluate progress.
- The school will have processes in place to identify and respond to individual students who require additional assistance and support.
- The school will build strong links with the local community to gain access to an extended network of community members, professionals and educators who can provide expertise and experience that can build the capacity of our school and our teachers to respond to the needs of the students.

- *teachers at Merbein P-10 College use the instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons*
- *teachers at Merbein P-10 College adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching*
- *our school's Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community*
- *carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *Students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Learning Centre Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs*
- *All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, Learning Centre Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning*
- *we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students*

**Targeted**

- *each year group has a Learning Centre Leader responsible for their year, who monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support*
- *all students from Year 8 and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future*
- *connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer*

- *all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *Merbein P-10College assists students to plan their Year 10 work experience, supported by their Career Action Plan*
- *wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*

*Individual*

- *Student Support Groups, see: http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/supportgroups.aspx*
- *Individual Learning Plan and Behaviour Support Plan*
- *Program for Students with Disabilities*
- *referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services*
- *referral to ChildFirst, Headspace*
- *Navigator*
- *Lookout*

*Merbein P-10 College implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:*

- *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school*
- *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan*
- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*
- *referring the student to:*
  - *school-based wellbeing supports*
  - *Student Support Services*
  - *Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst*
  - *Re-engagement programs such as Navigator*

*Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:*

- *being responsive and sensitive  to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing*
- *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
- *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
  - *with a disability*
  - *in Out of Home Care*
  - *and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

6. Identifying students in need of support

*Merbein P-10 College is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Example School 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*
- *attendance records*

- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour,  self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *attendance, detention and suspension data*
- *engagement with families*
- *self-referrals or referrals from peers*
- *[Amend to include other referral pathways]*

## 7.   Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

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, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

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

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 the school leadership team.

## 8.   Student behavioural expectations

*Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with Example School's Bullying policy.*

*When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Merbein P-10 College will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.*

*Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour (see Appendix 3)consistent with our SWPB program and in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.*

*Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:*

- *warning  a student that their behaviour is inappropriate*
- *teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *referral to the Learning Centre Leader*
- *restorative practices*
- *detentions*
- *behaviour reviews/tracking*
- *suspension – both internal and external*

- *expulsion*

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:
http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

## 9. Engaging with families

Merbein P-10 College values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.


## 10. Evaluation

Merbein P-10 College will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- CASES21
- SOCS

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 24th June 2019and is scheduled for review in June 2021.

# Staged response checklist for student behaviour issues

| Stage 1: Promoting positive behaviour and preventing behavioural issues | |
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| **Suggested strategies** | **School actions** |
| Define and teach school-wide expectations for all. | SWPBIS framework and teaching plan |
| Establish whole school positive behaviour programs. | SWPBIS protocols, checklists, proccedures |
| Establish consistent school-wide processes to identify and support students at risk of disengagement from learning. | Regular review of student learning data, attendance data, student referral data, student surveys by learning centre leaders and administration. |

| Stage 2: Responding to individual students exhibiting challenging behaviour | |
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| **Suggested strategies** | **School actions** |
| Assess the behaviour and its functions, influences, and triggers (include student, parents and school wellbeing staff as appropriate). | Regular meetings of learning centre staff to identify any anomalies to students behavior. Form teacher to observe student behavior to identify anomalies |
| Develop Behaviour Support Plan and/or Individual Education Plan (involve parent or carer) | Learning Centre leader, AP parents and students to co-develop appropriate learning and behavior plans |
| Consider if any environmental changes need to be made. | Look at options for different classes seating arrangements or parts of the school |
| Teach replacement behaviors. | Use SWPBIS frameworks to teach students acceptable behaviours |
| Engage Student Support Services and/or community services to undertake assessments and/or provide specialist support | Enlist the support of SSSO network, |
| Establish a student support group | This would be done early in the process and involve the parent student school and any external agencies involved |
| Implement appropriate disciplinary measures that are proportionate to problem behaviours | Implement a staged approach to discipline that coincides with a staged approach to teaching appropriate behaviors. |
| Consider out-of-school behaviour management options such as Student Development Centres (if available) | Explore external agencies that might be able support the child. Eg external referral to CYMHS or Doherty's Wellbeing. |

# Process for responding to breaches of Behaviour Expectations

| Rules | Classroom Teacher Responsibility | Learning Centre Leaders (LCL) |
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| **Overall behaviour**<br><br>• Students must obey all reasonable requests of staff.<br><br>• Students must always treat others with respect.<br><br>• Students must respect the rights of others to learn. No student has the right to impact on the learning of others.<br><br>• Students must respect the property of others.<br><br>• Students must bring correct equipment to all classes<br><br>• Students must work to the best of their ability. | *Follow the "5 Steps to Classroom Control":*<br><br>1. *Remain calm*<br>2. *Warn with rights based warning "Your behaviour is disturbing others, please stop".*<br>3. *Reassert "I understand and we can discuss this later. Right now please…*<br>4. *Give choice "You have a choice. If you will not comply you will have to meet with me at lunchtime, afterschool etc*<br>5. *Follow through with graded consequences:*<br>   a. *Move student to another seat / isolated area of the classroom*<br>   b. *Seat student outside of classroom on chair for 10 minutes with a task and organize for conference after class(restorative chat)*<br>*Write referral on SMIT to be followed up.*<br>   c. *Remove to another classroom for time out*<br>   d. *Organize conference/restorative chat to include LCL /AP*<br><br>*When a referral is written the following actions need to be taken.*<br><br>   a. *Consult with Sub School Manager.*<br>   b. *Contact with parent after consultation with Learning Centre Leader* | *Implement a staged response:*<br><br>• *Speak with the student prior to action*<br>• *Student to ring and inform parent of misbehavior in presence of LCL*<br>• *Behaviour sheet*<br>• *Attendance sheet*<br>• *Placement into VCE class*<br>• *Restorative chat with affected parties*<br>• *Behaviour Plans*<br>• *Student Contract*<br>• *Parent contact*<br>• *Student support conference*<br>• *Friday afternoon detention*<br>• *In house suspension*<br>• *Recommendation to externally suspend and referral to AP* |

| Overall behaviour | 6. *Remain calm* | Implement a staged response: |
|---|---|---|
| • Students must obey all reasonable requests of staff. | 7. *Warn with rights based warning "Your behaviour is disturbing others, please stop".* | • *Speak with the student prior to action* |
| • Students must always treat others with respect. | 8. *Reassert "I understand and we can discuss this later. Right now please…"* | • *Student to ring and inform parent of misbehavior in presence of LCL* |
| • Students must respect the rights of others to learn. No student has the right to impact on the learning of others. | 9. *Give choice "You have a choice. If you will not comply you will have to meet with me at lunchtime, afterschool etc* | • *Behaviour sheet*<br>• *Attendance sheet*<br>• *Placement into VCE class*<br>• *Restorative chat with affected parties* |
| • Students must respect the property of others. | 10. *Follow through with graded consequences:* | • *Behaviour Plans*<br>• *Student Contract*<br>• *Parent contact* |
| • Students must bring correct equipment to all classes | e. *Move student to another seat / isolated area of the classroom* | • *Student support conference*<br>• *Friday afternoon detention* |
| • Students must work to the best of their ability. | f. *Seat student outside of classroom on chair for 10 minutes with a task and organize for conference after class(restorative chat)* | • *In house suspension*<br>• *Recommendation to externally suspend and referral to AP* |
| | *Write referral on SMIT to be followed up.* | |
| | g. *Remove to another classroom for time out* | |
| | h. *Organize conference/restorative chat to include LCL /AP* | |
| | *When a referral is written the following actions need to be taken.* | |
| | c. *Consult with Sub School Manager.* | |
| | d. *Contact with parent after consultation with Learning Centre Leader* | |

| **Attendance and punctuality** <br><br> <span style="color:red">**Check the new rules**</span> <br><br> • Students must be on time to all classes <br> • Students who are late to period one must report to the general office to get a late pass. <br> • Students who leave school early must have a note from home signed by their sub school manager prior to signing out at the office. <br> • Students absent from school must ensure reasons for the absence have been communicated with the school. <br> • Notification from home (ie: signed note or medical certificate) must accompany all absences. <br> • Students must not leave the school grounds without permission. | <span style="color:red">**Check the new rules**</span> <br><br> *Check late pass. Adjust entry on First Class roll marking to 'Late'* <br><br> *Speak to student about lateness and detain at end of lesson if periods 2, or 4 or 5 over the issue. If this occurs during session 1 or 3 then make a note in class roll to catch the student during your next session 2,4 or 5.* <br><br> *Report to Learning Centre Leader if on-going* <br><br><br> *Report to learning Centre Leader /admin* | <span style="color:red">**Check the new rules**</span> <br><br> *Speak to student about **lateness** issues.* <br><br> *On going lateness: Friday afterschool detention and/ or organise for parent conference to resolve issue.* <br><br> *Follow through with student and / or parent/guardian/carer* <br><br> *Consistent lateness will result in lunch detention then after school detention* <br><br><br> *After three days **absence**: Organise for contact with parents which may lead to a parent conference as per the school's attendance strategy. Inform Student Welfare Coordinator. Inform the Principal Class via distribution list.* <br><br> *Positively acknowledge students for their regular attendance* <br><br> *Legislated fines may be imposed* |
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| **Uniform** <br><br> • Students must adhere to the school uniform requirements. <br> • It is compulsory for all students to wear appropriate footwear at all times. | *Check uniform pass. If no pass, inform student that contact will be made with parents.* <br><br> *Report extremes in appearance to Principal Class* | *Check uniform pass. If no pass, confiscate the item of clothing and impose a Friday afternoon detention.* |

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| **Bullying**<br><br>• Students must not bully, intimidate, exclude or harass others. This includes any verbal, cyberbullying, physical or sexual conduct which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person. | *Speak to the perpetrator and the victim.*<br><br>*Report via SMIT to Learning Centre Leader* | *Contact parents and involve Learning Centre Leader*<br><br>*Refer to our school's Bullying Prevention Policy. Consequences may include apology, anti bullying contract, student task related to anti bullying/cyber bullying, presentation of task to year level, referral to intervention program and/or counselling.*<br><br>*Some cases may warrant immediate suspension. This decision must be made by the Principal.*<br><br>*Student removed from classroom and parent contacted to collect students. Following procedure in Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance re: Immediate suspension.* |
| **Property and security**<br><br>• Students are to respect all school property.<br><br>• Students must not enter staff room, offices or lifts unless supervised.<br><br>• Students must bin all rubbish<br><br>• Students must not have the following at school: Liquid paper, chewing gum, medium felt pens.<br><br>• Students must return borrowed school material on time. | *Challenge behaviours around rights and responsibilities and impose consequence e.g. clean up duties in common room or school grounds.*<br><br>*For repeated offences, refer to Learning Centre Leader* | *Challenge behaviours around rights and responsibilities and impose consequence e.g. clean up duties in common room or school grounds.*<br><br>*For repeat offenders, place in lunchtime or after school detention* |

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| • Students must keep lockers secure at all times. School will not be responsible for loss of valuables. <br><br> • Students must leave school bags in lockers. <br><br> • Electronic devices must not be used without permission. <br><br><br> • Classrooms must be left neat and tidy. <br><br><br><br> • Graffiti of any kind will not be tolerated. | *Confiscate the bag.* <br><br> *Confiscate iPod or mobile phone and take to General office* <br><br> *Organise for students to remain behind and tidy the room or area.* <br><br> *Retain any evidence of graffiti and report to Principal Class* | *Parent notified. Student required to repair damage. Parent may be required to meet costs if external service needed. If extensive and persistent issue, organise a parent meeting to review behaviour and discuss supports and next steps.* |

| | Respect | Responsibility | Quality |
|---|---|---|---|
| **All Settings** | • Respect the personal space and privacy of others<br>• Show courtesy and always use appropriate language<br>• Treat yours, others and school property with care<br>• Follow staff directions straight away<br>• Speak to others kindly<br>• Treat others kindly<br>• Show respect to visitors to the school community<br>• Be friendly and welcoming to others | • Attend school every day in full and correct uniform<br>• Move safely around the school<br>• Maintain a neat and tidy environment<br>• Help others that look in need | • Wear uniform with pride<br>• Model positive behaviour<br>• Look after and include each other |
| **Classrooms** | • Enter and leave in a sensible manner<br>• Follow teachers' instructions<br>• Use an inside voice<br>• Ask permission to use headphones in class<br>• Put mobile phones on the desk on silent<br>• Enter and exit through the correct doors<br>• Treat all teachers and students with respect | • Be on time<br>• Arrive with correct equipment<br>• Allow everyone to learn<br>• Listen when others are speaking | • Complete all tasks to the best of your ability<br>• Maintain a positive and safe learning environment<br>• Work hard and stay positive |
| **Corridors** | • Walk to the left<br>• Move safely<br>• Spray deodorants can cause asthma when used indoors, please use outside if necessary<br>• Walk quietly outside classrooms | • Place rubbish in bins<br>• Watch where you are going<br>• Respect personal space<br>• Keep your locker areas clean<br>• Ball games to be played outside only | • Help others<br>• Be friendly<br>• Smile<br>• Set a good example |
| **Lockers** | • Be mindful of your 'locker' neighbour<br>• Respect privacy of others<br>• Keep locker areas clean and tidy | • Have a lock on your locker<br>• Have your timetable in your locker<br>• Move away from your locker quickly | • Keep locker neat and tidy<br>• Have books organised |

| Yard | • Place rubbish in the bin<br>• Show good sportsmanship<br>• Stay within your allocated age area<br>• Share tables and equipment with others<br>• Use positive and appropriate language<br>• Follow rules<br>• Display school values in all areas | • Borrow and return equipment from staff room<br>• Play safely<br>• Look after equipment | • Include others<br>• Look after younger students |
|---|---|---|---|
| Canteen | • Use your manners<br>• Line up patiently in single file<br>• Separate order for lunch orders<br>• Respect others place in the line | • Order lunch before school or at recess<br>• Place rubbish in the bins<br>• Make healthy choices<br>• If not ordering wait at least 3m from the lines | • Have your order and money ready |
| Bus | • Use manners<br>• Follow the driver's instructions<br>• Line up patiently<br>• Wait inside the school grounds | • Line up behind the fence<br>• Allow people on the bus to exit first<br>• Have pass or money ready | • Be a good ambassador for our school<br>• Store your bag safely<br>• Use appropriate language |
| Online Spaces and Technology | • Use appropriate language<br>• Treat all online friends with respect | • Be cyber-smart<br>• Report any problems immediately | • Use technology when you have permission<br>• Only access appropriate sites |
| Toilet | • Respect the privacy of others<br>• Use toilets appropriately<br>• Treat facilities with respect | • Use the toilets during the breaks<br>• Report any damage or graffiti | • Practise good hygiene<br>• Keep the area clean |