



Letter to parents for 07.01.2025

office@melbournvc.org  
www.melbournvc.org

Principal: Rachel Spencer  
BA Hons, MCCT

Dear Parents and Carers,

As my first official communication as Principal of Melbourn Village College, I would like to wish you all a very Happy New Year. I hope you all had a restful Christmas break with friends and family. As we return to the Spring Term, we have much to look forward to as we begin our journey toward excellence together.

It is essential that we all work in partnership on this journey so that we can build momentum and achieve our shared vision for improvement. By the February half term, we aim to ensure that lessons are purposeful and respectful, providing the best environment for students to learn, achieve their full potential, and benefit from engaging lessons that help them gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed. I am unapologetically ambitious for our wonderful school and have a clear vision for how we will move forward on our journey to excellence. We are committed to being an inclusive school, with excellent behaviour and positive attitudes. In line with our village college heritage, our school will remain both at the heart and in the hearts of the community.

We are moving at pace to ensure that Melbourn Village College is a school we are all proud of. During our INSET day on Monday 6th January, staff from across all areas of the school came together as one team for full training on our rapid improvement actions. Staff are excited about our ambition for the school community and are fully supportive of our new routines and expectations. A key focus of the training was the importance of praise in supporting students as they strive to meet these new expectations.

Today, we launched our theme for the half term: Respect, Respond, Reward. This morning, all students participated in an extended tutor time session, during which they received an assembly outlining our new routines and expectations. Form tutors also led sessions designed to reinforce these expectations and help students understand the positive impact they will have. Additionally, students enjoyed group discussions related to our theme, with the opportunity to share their thoughts on the new rewards programme we are introducing.

I have attached here an example of the slides shared with staff and students this week. I would like to highlight an overview of some of those key changes.

## Reward

An important part of our reset is rewards so that students are acknowledged when they make the right choices. Positive points are available every lesson and are worth double the negative points. We want to celebrate student effort and attainment. We want students to be proud of their achievements and celebrate this together.

Today we have launched our Tutee of the Week award. On Mondays the Tutee of the Week will be announced during tutor time, and the students receiving this award will gain 10 positive points and a



certificate to bring home. The Tutees of the Week from across all year groups are invited to enjoy hot chocolate with members of the pastoral team on Thursday 16th January during tutor time to acknowledge this achievement. This is something we will be rolling out on a weekly basis so please do look out for your child receiving this award. Tutors will be awarding this to those students who consistently demonstrate making positive choices around behaviour and attitude to learning.

In my letter before Christmas, I mentioned that we will be looking at how we can further develop our whole school rewards. Students have already started to share their thoughts during our extended tutor time today working together to agree rewards they would like within our rewards policy. I am also due to meet with the Prefects on Thursday this week to start discussions around rewards. Mr Willder will be taking a strategic lead on rewards so please look out for further communications.

## **Respond**

During my visits last term, I received valuable feedback from students. They told me that teachers had different expectations regarding how students enter and exit classrooms, as well as how attention is gained during lessons. This inconsistency can be confusing for students, particularly for those with Special Educational Needs. To address this, we have introduced consistent expectations across all classrooms which will help provide greater structure and support. By having clear and consistent routines for every classroom based lesson, we will remove cognitive overload for students and provide clarity on our expectations.

In the classroom, teachers will now be using a consistent method to gain students' attention, which will help make transitions between different activities smooth and effective. All staff will use a countdown approach, giving students a clear signal that the lesson is moving forward. This will ensure that transition moments are efficient and that teaching and learning can proceed without unnecessary disruption.

We believe that all students should enjoy learning in an environment free from disruption. To support this goal, we have shared with students the clear consequences for any disruption to learning, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to focus and succeed. In line with our commitment to a positive and orderly school environment, we have introduced a system for managing negative behaviour points. Each negative behaviour point represents one incident of disruptive behaviour. This system helps us track and address issues promptly and fairly.

In order to support our students and families, we are mindful of the fact that many of our students travel by bus. For this reason, we are providing 24 hours' notice for detentions so that you can arrange alternative transport home for your child. Please note that if a student fails to attend their scheduled **B2 detention** (a 30-minute detention), the detention will be extended to 60 minutes on the following day. The only exception to this policy will be if a student is absent on the day the original detention was set, in which case the detention will be rescheduled. We ask for your support with this process as good behaviour is the foundation to a 'good' school.

## **Respect**

This morning, tutors worked with students to rehearse our new entry and exit routines, ensuring they are equipped to succeed in the classroom environment. Practising these routines during our extended tutor time was an essential part of this process, as we want every student to feel confident in knowing what is expected of them. Furthermore, our staff training has placed a strong emphasis on positive reinforcement and praise as I believe it is crucial to acknowledge and celebrate when students make good choices.

We have established clear expectations for behaviour in order to create a safe, respectful, and focused learning environment for all of our students. To ensure these standards are met, we have defined "red line" behaviours that are not acceptable at any time. These "red lines" include actions that significantly disrupt the learning environment, compromise the safety of others, or display a lack of respect for our school community. Students fully understand that these behaviours are unacceptable, and when they do occur, they will receive a sanction appropriate to the severity of the behaviour. It is important that we all work together to ensure that our school remains a positive and respectful place for everyone.

I look forward to meeting the parents who have booked a listening session with me. Please see in the newsletter on the school website for further details should you wish to have the opportunity to me with me. Alternately, please email my PA on [lyoung@melbournvc.org](mailto:lyoung@melbournvc.org)

We are excited for the term ahead and look forward to working with you to make Melbourn Village College a place where every child can flourish.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Mrs Rachel Spencer  
Principal