



Southern Autistic School

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.

Southern Autistic school 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.

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POLICY

1. School profile

Southern Autistic School is a specialist school dedicated to the education of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder and with significant deficits in language. Located in Bentleigh East, Southern Autistic services the South-east Victoria Region with students attending from a vast catchment area. Nine DET funded buses support student transport to the school through the Student Transport Unit. 234 school aged students attend Southern Autistic School. To enrol in the school aged program students must meet the Program for Students with a Disability ASD eligibility. 24 students were enrolled in the Early Education Program for 3 to 4 year olds. Our

curriculum and education programs include the Early Education Program and extend through to those in senior secondary years up to 18 years of age.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Vision

Southern Autistic School's vision is for our students is to develop lifelong learners who have a sense of belonging and are encouraged to implement their skills and knowledge to make choices and accept responsibility for their decisions.

Mission

Southern Autistic School is committed to building relationships that value diversity and are based on collaboration, mutual respect, social equality, co-operation, shared responsibility and self-discipline.

Values

The following values are seen as being central to the life of our school and how all members of the school community should conduct themselves.

I am Safe

I am a learner

I belong

Engagement and wellbeing strategies

Students behave positively when they know; what is expected of them, when they feel safe, and that people care about them and their learning. Great teachers and great teaching make a significant difference to how students behave and learn. Positive behaviour doesn't just happen. Students need to know what is expected of them and what positive behaviour looks like.

Southern Autistic School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

SCHOOL WIDE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT – An evidence based approach to teaching and managing student behaviour. The tiered approach to teaching behaviour explicitly teaches students how to behave appropriately across all aspects of their school day.

INDIVIDUAL REWARD SYSTEM – Personalised to students when required. This system is used to shape behaviour more instantly. Students earn a series of tokens which then enables them ready access to an immediate rewards.

I CAN BE SAFE – our social safety program empowers students by developing knowledge around what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours around their bodies.

WELBEING AND SPOT TEAM – The team meets with students and teachers to provide all elements of wellbeing support for students. Teachers follow a referral process to initiate support.

TRAUMA – staff working with students who exhibit behaviours as a result of childhood trauma have access to training.

Whole School

At Southern Autistic School we use a variety of strategies to guide us in supporting student wellbeing and engagement. At Southern Autistic School we:

- Set high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, through our School Wide Positive Behaviour Support Approach to develop positive behaviour
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- Deliver an individualised and targeted learning program in alignment with the Victorian Curriculum.
- Provide individual learning plans in 3 priority areas: Communication, Health and Social Competencies.
- teachers at Southern Autistic School use the STAR/LINKS 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 Example school 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 communicated to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Year Group 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, which includes programs like:
 - I Can Be Safe
 - Respectful Relationships
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- buddy programs, peers support programs

Individual

Southern Autistic School implements arrange of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Student Support Groups
- Individual Learning Plan
- Behaviour Support Plan
- referral to Student Wellbeing Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace
- Attendance at Care plan meetings with external stakeholders
- Working with Support Services (SSS) Psychologists

3. Identifying students in need of support

Southern Autistic School 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. Southern Autistic 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
- involvement with external child-focused agencies
- Communication with families

4. 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 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.

5. Student behavioural expectations

Students will follow School Expectations as set out in the SWPBS Matrix.

	Always	When we are out and about	When we are private	When we are working	When we are playing	When we are moving
I am a Learner	Listen to staff and follow instructions	Follow the expected routine in the community Have a go	I close the door I flush the toilet and leave it clean I wash my hand with soap and water	Follow classroom schedule Make choices about learning Ask for help	Initiate interactions/play Use the communication visual in the yard	Building independence in transitioning
I am Safe	STOP WALK TALK Make good choices	Stay with the group "Walk with me" Road Safety awareness So-Safe Program	I close the door I wash my hands with soap and water	Hands Down Use and share resources appropriately Ask before leaving the room Use own password and log in for computers	Hands down Use equipment safely Wearing appropriate clothing Play safe games	Hands down "Walk with me"
I belong	Wear school uniform	We help each other We stay together as a group We use quiet voices	I knock before entering the toilet I leave the toilet clean I am in and out promptly and return to the class quickly.	Use kinds words Keep classroom tidy Take turns	We include others in games We share spaces and equipment	Stay with your group We leave space ready for the next group Quiet voices

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.

6. Engaging with families

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
- Inviting families to celebration events such as end of term parties, fun days and whole school assemblies.
- Providing the opportunity for families to attend Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

7. Evaluation

Southern Autistic school 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

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated May 2019 and is scheduled for review in May 2020