

# Springvale Park Special Developmental School



## STUDENT WELL-BEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

At Springvale Park Special Developmental School (SPSDS), we consider the health, safety and well-being of all children and young people to be our highest priority. We strive to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people at our school at all times. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful and inclusive school environment where all students can be happy, confident and resilient, regardless of their sexual or gender identity, cultural background disability or other circumstances. We take account of the diversity of all children, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and vulnerable children.

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 well-being 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.

### 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.

### SCOPE

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

### CONTENTS

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy, and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities

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6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families and management
8. Evaluation

## POLICY

### 1. School Profile

Springvale Park SDS is located in the southeastern suburb of Springvale, approximately 30km from Melbourne and enjoys an outstanding reputation within the local community. The school is set in attractive, well-maintained grounds that provide students with a variety of play / sporting and passive areas. The school is well resourced, and the buildings are in excellent condition and provide outstanding teaching and learning spaces. The student cohort comprises 40 nationalities, including recent migrants and refugees, with the largest subgroup being Vietnamese. We strive to achieve the best educational outcomes for all students. The school has been experiencing a steady growing EFT number of student enrolments with the current enrolment at 199 school-age students and a further 43 children in the Early Education program. The enrolment trend data indicates continuous growth over the foreseeable years. All of the school-age students are on the Program for Students with Disabilities (PSD). Many of the students have associated comorbidity with Autism, Epilepsy, physical and sensory disabilities, hearing, and vision impairment. The staff are trained in a variety of medical management strategies to cater for all identified student needs.

The school's aim is for every student to reach the maximum expected level of independence by the time they leave the school. The school's programs are tailored to each student's abilities, needs and interests. All students have individual education plans that are developed at SSG's with parents, carers, teachers, education support staff and therapists where required. The individual education plans have targeted, measurable goals that are monitored to ensure progress.

### 2. School values, philosophy, and vision

The following values are central to our school and how all members of our school community should conduct themselves. They incorporate the three key elements of Compassion, Integrity, and Respect.

The policy describes Compassion as representing an active desire to understand people's needs and feelings and act positively in response to them, and as being a positive force. Its principles include:

Patience

- An ability to listen.
- A willingness to act
- An ability to reflect

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Integrity represents truthfulness and honesty in relationships with others. It involves maintaining high standards of behaviour and professionalism and demands a willingness to communicate with others and resolve conflict.

Its principles include:

- Accountability and Responsibility
- Honesty
- Teamwork
- Safety First
- Confidentiality and Truthfulness

Respect represents the idea that all people should be treated with consideration and thoughtfulness and that we seek to understand the ideas and views of others.

Its principles include:

An appreciation of others

- Dignity and trust
- Individuality

The Policy includes ways in which these values can be actively applied in the classroom, through school activities and programs, at meal times, and in the wider school environment.

### ***3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies***

Springvale Park Special Developmental 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.

A summary of the whole school and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

#### **Universal**

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- 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
- small staff to student ratios
- Explicit teaching – teacher adapt programs to meet needs of students
- Multiple exposures to provide student with multiple opportunities to encounter, engage with and elaborate on new knowledge and skills
- Differentiated Teaching to lift the performance of all students

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- 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, Parent opinion survey data
- deliver a broad curriculum to ensure that students are able to participate in programs that are tailored to their interests and strengths
- teachers at Springvale Park Special Developmental School use a Pedagogical 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 Springvale Park Special Developmental 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 formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- a whole school approach for positive behaviour support (SWPBS) is implanted across the school
- 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 about school operations through the Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through our buddy program, whole school concert, sports days and a variety of incursions and excursions
- All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Mental Health Practitioner, 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 such as:
  - Respectful Relationships
  - Safe Schools
- programs, incursions, and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (community access, swimming program and bike ed)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e., sporting activities, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)

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- buddy programs, peers support programs
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.
- Food Bank – food boxes available for families and supplies given to classrooms for students
- Esmart School
- Protect supports Child Safe Standards and responds to signs of child abuse. Staff are mandatory trained yearly

## Targeted

- Classroom teachers are responsible to monitor the health and well-being of students in their class, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
- all students in the Senior Section of our school and their families will be assisted to plan for their post school options with targeted goals and support to plan for their future
- all students in Out of Home Care will be appointed a Learning Mentor, have an Individual Education Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- 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
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- 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
- our English as a second language students are supported through our EAL program, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through: Harmony Day celebrations, provision of interpreters at school presentations & meetings, written translations, as well as dietary or cultural considerations. Staff receive training through ADEC (Action on Disability in Ethnic Communities).

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- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee backgrounds through family engagement, and our Wellbeing Coordinator- who has trained in approaches to support child mental health in CALD communities (via the Australian Institute of Family Studies).

## Individual

- Student Support Groups, see: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy>
- Individual Educational Plan
- Behaviour Support Plan
- Individual Self Care Plan
- Students with Health Care Needs – support with health support plans such as PEG, Emergency Medication for Epilepsy
- Program for Students with Disabilities/Disability Inclusion Profile
- Referral to Mental Health Practitioner and Student Support Services
- Referral to Child First
- Referral to Orange Door
- Specialist Disability Services
- Student Support Services
- Financial support available for families through State School Relief and Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund

as well as to other Department programs and services such as:

- Program for Students with Disabilities/ Disability Inclusion Profile
- Mental health toolkit
- headspace
- LOOKOUT

Springvale Park Special Developmental School 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 students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing an Individual Educational Plan
- Behaviour Support Plan as needed
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up

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- 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, Orange Door or Child First

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 in collaboration with the student and their family and conducting regular Student Support Group meetings for all students.
- Running termly Student Support Group meetings for all students

## 4. Identifying students in need of support

Springvale Park Special Developmental School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally, and socially. All teachers and staff including the Student Wellbeing team play a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Springvale Park Special Developmental 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
- engagement with families
- self-referrals
- NDIS Support
- Mental Health Practitioner

## 5. 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:

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- 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 opportunity 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. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

## 6. Student behavioural expectations and management

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

*Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with the Bullying Policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.*

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Springvale Park Special Developmental School 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 action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores, and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour 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:



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- 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
- behaviour support and intervention meetings

Suspension, expulsion, and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The principal of Springvale Park Special Developmental School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

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

## 7. Engaging with families

Springvale Park Special Developmental School 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
- involving families in school decision making
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with other curriculum-related activities
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual education plans for students

## 8. Evaluation

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Springvale Park Special Developmental School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of well-being 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

Springvale Park Special Developmental School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

## 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
- Included in enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

## Further Information and Resources

Springvale Park Special Developmental School policies are available by request or on the school website.

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The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safe Standards
- Attendance
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

|                            |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|
| Policy last reviewed       | 23 August 2023 |
| Consultation               | School Council |
| Approved by                | Principal      |
| Next scheduled review date | August 2025    |