



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.

Sydney Road Community 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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- School values, philosophy and vision
- Engagement strategies
- Identifying students in need of support
- Student rights and responsibilities
- Student behavioural expectations
- Engaging with families
- Evaluation

School Profile

Sydney Road Community School is a small government school able to accommodate a large range of needs and aspirations. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. Our school values, Learning, Respect, Safety and Opportunity, were developed in consultation with the whole school community. Students are expected to work cooperatively and collectively within the school to support others, as well as in the broader and global community. Our work with students is differentiated yet fair and equitable.



School values, philosophy and vision

Sydney Road Community School's vision is to ensure that everyone in our school community is treated with fairness and respect. That our learning environment is an inclusive and safe space, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn to reach their full potential. At Sydney Road Community School we value individuals and celebrate differences. We want every student to feel they belong and know they will be looked after. Our school values, Learning, Respect, Safety and Opportunity, have been developed via the implementation of School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS). We are always learning. We respect each other and ourselves. We build a positive environment for the safety of all. We make the most of every opportunity. Students and staff are expected to work cooperatively and collectively within the school to support others, as well as in the broader and global community. Our students learn to be critical thinkers and active citizens by taking on roles of real responsibility, particularly in Student Action Teams.

See [School statement of vision and values](#)

Engagement Strategies

A relevant and challenging curriculum is provided for all students. A positive climate for learning is maintained within the school, particularly through application of our School Wide Positive Behaviour Strategy.

Attendance and effort scores are recorded by subject teachers for every scheduled class. Attendance is recorded twice daily by contact teachers.

Contact Teachers are responsible for coordinating and supporting the learning programs of students in their group. This includes the development and implementation of comprehensive Individual Learning Plans and Career Action Plans, following up absences, and managing incidents and time-outs. Conflict within the school is managed with an approach based in Restorative Practices.

The Student Wellbeing Coordinator oversees access to a range of support services.

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

Universal:

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritising relationship based education in underlining everything we do at SRCS
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning



- committing to running a parent/caregiver action team to support parent/caregiver and caregiver involvement and engagement in school improvement
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent/caregiver survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum including VET programs, VCE and VCAL to ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at SRCS 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
- SRCS SWPBS values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to the whole school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- we use restorative practice to resolve relationship break down and situations where harm is caused
- Support the running of an LGTIBQ+ student group (stand out group)
- We are Respectful Relationships lead school
- we explicitly teach special and emotional regulation to our students
- we run an onsite re-engagement program to support students re-entering education after extended periods of disengagement, non-attendance or exclusions from other settings
- integrated life skills program that supports learners with diverse needs in attaining crucial skill ready skills
- we run a Hands on Learning Program which engages students in work ready skills and supports increased engagement through real world skill development
- we offer a free healthy meal every day for students to ensure that all members of our school community are feed and ready to learn

Targeted:

- each contact group has two contact teachers and a Wellbeing team member, who work as a team to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in their group, and act as a point of contact for students and their parents or caregiver who may need additional support
- all students from year 7 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
- Sydney Road Community School assists students to plan their Year 9/10 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:

- We have two full time Youth workers who support student and families by meeting their engagement needs on an individual basis
- Mental Health Practitioner - Occupational Therapist
- Visiting GP
- Visiting Psychologist
- Student Support Groups
- Individual Education Plans and Behaviour Support Plans
- Program for Students with Disabilities
- referral to Student Welfare Coordinator and Student Support Services
- referral to ChildFirst, Headspace, other community based agencies
- Navigator
- Lookout

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

Guidelines

Teachers are directly responsible for the supervision of students and management of risk at the school on account of their legal duty of care. This duty of care cannot be delegated.

Education Support staff are required to encourage positive behaviour and promote safe practices but are not responsible for the supervision or discipline of students.

Students are expected at all times to follow the reasonable instruction of any staff member.



Implementation

All staff will routinely promote positive behaviour and challenge inappropriate behaviour through discussion with students. Most often this will be a brief informal discussion. Students are expected to engage cooperatively. Staff may choose to record observations on Compass. If so, contact teachers should be alerted by email.

Other times teachers may require a student to take part in more detailed discussion to resolve a particular concern. Students may be asked to go to a room for a meeting. They are expected to cooperate. Meetings should involve at least two staff members. Details of all meetings should be recorded as an observation on Compass and contact teachers alerted via email.

Incident

More serious or repeated instances of inappropriate behaviour will be reported to the relevant contact teacher as an Incident. When notification of a student Incident is received the student will be required to attend a meeting with their contact teacher and the reporting staff member. The student is expected to cooperate to resolve the issue. If no resolution is reached another meeting must take place. If a student is deemed unfit to be at school a parent/caregiver or guardian may be contacted to discuss and approve the early and safe departure of the student. The contact teacher is responsible for ensuring details of each meeting are recorded as an Incident on Compass.

Bullying and harassment

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously. Incidents of bullying and harassment will be reported and followed up with both perpetrator and victim.

An incident form will be completed and discussed with contact teacher/s and the perpetrator. Discussions will include a re-statement of rules and student obligations at SRCS, and have restorative questioning that will help the perpetrator understand the nature and consequences of their behaviour.

A restorative meeting between both perpetrator and victim of the bullying will occur when it is considered in the best interests of both parties.

If there are repeated instances of the same or similar bullying, additional consequences such as suspension, following up with parents/carers, and the development of a behaviour contract will be put into place.

Students who continue to bully or harass represent a significant threat to safety and wellbeing and therefore should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation.

In our school individual differences are respected, and no form of bullying or harassment is acceptable. Anti-bullying and safe-schools subjects are part of our Personal Development



curriculum. The role of the bystander within our school community is seen as a vital link in the fight to stopping bullying. Everyone in our school community should name and speak out against bullying, and foster a safe environment where students have the skills, confidence and resilience to be able to speak out against bullying and harassment.

Time-out

During classes a teacher may choose to address inappropriate behaviour through our Time-out process. This involves the issuing of three warnings before the student is asked to leave the classroom. When giving a warning the teacher will identify the cause in terms of the student's behaviour and clearly communicate that a warning has been given as part of the time-out process. On the third warning the student is required to leave, sit in an available room for the remainder of the class and attend a meeting with their contact teacher and the classroom teacher at the beginning of the next break in classes (i.e. recess, lunch or after school). The student is expected to cooperate to resolve the issue. If no resolution is reached another meeting must take place. The contact teacher is responsible for ensuring details of the meeting are recorded as a Time-out on Compass.

On rare occasions students may behave in a manner which is unsafe to themselves or others in the class. This will result in an immediate time-out with no warning required. In these cases the student will follow the above Time-out procedures.

Suspension

In certain circumstances schools are permitted to consider suspension as a consequence for inappropriate student behaviour. The principal is the only person with authority to suspend a student, and must first ensure the student has had the opportunity to be heard, all information has been taken into account and other forms of action have been considered.

The most extreme disciplinary measure available to a principal is expulsion. It should only be used after other forms of behaviour management have been exhausted. Corporal punishment is not permitted in any Victorian schools.

At SRCS we have moved away from using any form of punishment to manage behaviours of concern. This is not to say that all behaviour is acceptable within our school, to the contrary we have high standards of acceptable behaviour and use our SWPBS framework to explicitly teach the behaviours in line with our school values as well as address behaviours of concern. We do not give detentions, suspensions or expel students. We do use restorative practice, group conferences and modified timetables and therapeutic support as tools for supporting improved engagement and self regulation.



Identifying students in need of support

Sydney Road Community 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 to help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Sydney Road Community 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
- wellbeing data
- Learner Self Evaluation of Engagement (LSEA)
- contact teacher referrals

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 themselves and 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.



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 is unable to uphold our SWPBS values, Sydney Road Community School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Parents/Caregivers 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 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
- referral to the student wellbeing and or Principal for additional support
- restorative practices
- student support group meeting
- Introduction of individual program and or timetable
- behaviour support planning meeting

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.

Engaging with families

SRCS 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, via newsletters and on request
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent/caregiver volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with curriculum-related activities



- Involving families in IEP development
- Inviting families into the school for regular celebrations
- 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.

Evaluation

Sydney Road Community 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/caregiver survey
- case management
- CASES21

Related Policy Documents

[Bullying prevention Policy](#)

[School statement of vision and values](#)

[Student Wellbeing handbook](#)

[SWPBS Matrix](#)

[Student Engagement Policy](#)

[Contact Teacher Role Description](#)



Approval and Review Details

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