



Northern School for Autism

"Learning for Life"

STATEMENT OF VALUES AND SCHOOL PHILISOPHY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our school community and explain the vision, mission and objectives of the school.

SCOPE

This policy is intended for School Leadership, all staff, parents/carers, School Council and the broader community.

POLICY

Northern School for Autism is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. We recognise the importance of the partnership between the school and parent/carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at the Northern School for Autism support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our school's vision, mission, objective, values and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook, student and staff diary (*from 2022*) and enrolment/transition packs.

The school will take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues.

The safety and wellbeing of our school population is our highest priority and our first consideration.

We have **zero tolerance of child abuse**, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

The school expects that when the School Strategic Plan is updated, it will contain statements about the school's commitment to developing a child safe culture.

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School Leadership should be willing and able to discuss the school philosophy with other staff and prospective parents/carers.

An explanation of the school philosophy will form part of the induction process for new members of staff.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

- Display posters and banners that promote the values in our school. in public places readily accessed by parents/carers and visitors to the school. The Statement will also be displayed in areas such as the staffroom, offices and meeting rooms so that decisions can be tested against the school Vision, Mission and Values statements.
- Celebrate our values in our school newsletter
- Provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
- Discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies

VISION

Northern School for Autism strives to be a centre of excellence.

Our motto is “Learning for Life”.

MISSION

Students are supported towards developing their personal and educational potential, so as to be valued contributors to family and community life.

OBJECTIVE

The school is committed to the implementation of best practice in teaching and learning for students with ASD. The community of Northern School for Autism believes that to succeed in the world, students need to develop the capacity to:

- Manage themselves as individuals, and in relation to others,
- Understand the world in which they live,
- Act effectively in that world,
- Make a positive contribution to their world.

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VALUES

Our Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of:

-  Trust
-  Understanding
-  Safety

We **trust** ourselves, our school and each other to implement a teaching and learning program that builds on our strengths.

Our community **understands** the importance to support us by providing an inclusive environment where we can thrive.

Our school provides us with a **safe** learning environment where we can practice behaviours that help us become valued members of the community.

The school shares the universal values that:

Every member of the school community has a right to fully participate in an educational environment that is safe, supportive and inclusive.

Everyone deserves to be treated with respect and dignity.

IMPLEMENTATION

Vision, Mission and Values

- This school will develop Vision, Mission and Values statements in conjunction with the school community (please refer to the school's Statement Of Values and School Philosophy policy and Student Wellbeing & Engagement for these statements).
- School Council will approve all statements.
- If applicable, they will form part of the school profile in the School Strategic Plan.
- Statements will be displayed in public places readily accessed by parents/carers and visitors to the school.
- The statements also will be displayed in areas such as the staffroom, offices and meeting rooms so that decisions can be tested against the school Vision, Mission and Values statements.
- The school will take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues.
- The safety and wellbeing of our school population is our highest priority and our first consideration.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

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- The school expects that when the School Strategic Plan is updated, it will contain statements about the school's commitment to developing a child safe culture.
- School Leadership should be willing and able to discuss the school philosophy with other staff and prospective parents/carers.
- An explanation of the school philosophy will form part of the induction process for new members of staff.
- The school's Vision, Mission and Values will be reviewed collaboratively at least every three years.

School Objectives

School objectives will be determined every three years as part of the school review process.

Once endorsed by School Council, they will form part of the School Strategic Plan.

They will be reviewed annually as part of the annual self-evaluation.

As above, objectives will be displayed strategically throughout the school and will guide actions on a short- and long-term basis.

BEHAVIOURAL EXPECTATIONS

Northern School for Autism acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parent/carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children at our school.

As Principals and School Leaders, we will:

- model positive behaviour and effective leadership
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
- behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments
- plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students at school
- identify and support students who are or may be at risk
- do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
- work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
- inform parents of the school's communication and complaints procedures
- ask any person who is acting in an offensive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate way to leave the school grounds.

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As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

- model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- proactively engage with parents about student outcomes
- work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
- work collaboratively with parents/carers to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs
- communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents/carers
- treat all members of the school community with respect

As parents/carers, we will:

- model positive behaviour to our child
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
- ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction
- take an interest in our child's school and learning
- work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child
- communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
- support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
- follow the school's processes for communication with staff and making complaints
- treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, we will:

- model positive behaviour to other students
- communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community.
- comply with and model school values
- behave in a safe and responsible manner
- respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- actively participate in school
- not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

As community members, we will:

- model positive behaviour to the school community
- treat other members of the school community with respect
- support school staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
- utilise the school's processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

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UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Schools are not public places, and the Principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, please refer to our *Visitors to the School Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

- speaking or behaving in a rude, manipulative, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via electronic communication or social media, or over the telephone
- the use or threat of violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person’s personal space
- sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or derogatory comments
- the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the school Principal.

At the Principal’s discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

- requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
- implementing specific communication protocols
- written warnings
- conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
- exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
- reports to Victoria Police
- legal action

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in according with our school’s *Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention & Response Policy*.

Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Please refer also to the school’s *Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy*, the *Inclusion & Diversity Policy*, *Communication Procedures & Schedule Policy* and the Child Safe Standards.

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REVIEW CYCLE

- This policy, first developed in this format in May 2019 and updated in September 2020, will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.
- This policy was updated in August 2021 and is scheduled for review in August 2024.

EVALUATION

A mandatory policy

School Council Approval Now Required

- This policy was first ratified by School Council on 29th October 2020
- This policy was re- ratified by School Council on 5th August 2021.

This August 2021 updated policy was ratified by School Council on 9th September 2021

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