

Health and Wellbeing Policy

Southern Montessori Education Centre Inc.

Version	Approved By	Date	Maintained By	Next Review
3	Board of Governors	February 2029	Management	February 2029

Rationale

The physical and emotional health and wellbeing of all members of our Centre is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. Our policies and practices are founded in the development and sustenance of a happy, healthy school, where all learners can flourish. We promote positive emotional health and wellbeing so enable our students to better understand and express their feelings. This builds their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn.

Good emotional health and wellbeing encompasses:

- The ability to recognise, acknowledge and manage feelings
- The ability to develop caring and concern for others
- The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long lasting relationships
- The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions

Pastoral Care

Pastoral Care at our school flows from our school values:

Care and Compassion

Nurturing the development of children's social and emotional intelligence in an environment of trust and mutual respect which values each child's unique strengths and needs and encourages acceptance of self and others.

Courage

Teaching children to be brave when facing the unknown, to embrace challenges, to view failure as a learning opportunity and to act with integrity.

Curiosity

Driving student led learning through developing the ability to ask questions, to challenge, to inquire and to investigate independently and in cooperation with others.

Creative and Critical Thinking

Providing a stimulating learning environment that supports children to realise their full potential as intelligent, imaginative thinkers who see solutions rather than problems.

Choice

Enhancing wellbeing and personal growth by encouraging children to make productive choices and feel a sense of control over their learning and their lives.

Connection

Building the relationships and community now that will connect children to their world and teach them to care for and shape it for a brighter future.

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Facilitating our values:

1. Curriculum
Programs assist students to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills to function effectively as responsible, positive and ethical citizens. They include programs focusing on self-esteem, social relationships, moral development, vocational awareness, sexuality, health and personal safety, drug awareness, dealing with grief and loss, conflict resolution, social justice, community involvement and leadership.
2. Quality Relationships
The interactions of people within the Centre will be of a positive nature and based on the principles of mutual respect, tolerance and trust.
3. Inclusive Approaches to Teaching and Learning
All students, regardless of gender, age, religion or race, are supported to gain the necessary knowledge, skills and values associated with a fulfilling education, as well as the confidence and competence to participate fully in productive adult lives.
4. Strong School/Family Relationships
The relationship between the Centre and home fully respects the important partnership that exists between them.
5. Developing Networks of Care
Where appropriate, the Centre will assist students to make links with external support groups within the wider community.
6. Compliance
Centre practices are compliant with relevant aspects of both state and federal legislation, including child protection.

Student Wellbeing Counsellor

The school employs a Student Wellbeing Counsellor to work with individual students or small groups, as the need arises. Our counsellor is an experienced and accredited professional who adheres to strict guidelines for ethical practice in line with the Code of Ethics of the relevant professional accreditation body.

Our program offers a brief intervention model, typically involving 3–5 sessions with the counsellor. Your child may also be invited to participate in small group wellbeing sessions. If your child requires support beyond what can be provided at school, you will be advised to seek assistance from external services.

Referral Process

Students may be referred by classroom teachers and/or parents.

- **Primary School:** Parental permission is required for students to meet individually with the counsellor. Your child may be included in a short-term small group session without seeking prior consent if requested by a staff member (i.e. to work through a social/friendship challenge etc).
- **Middle School:** Students may self-refer. Parents who do not wish their child to access the Student Wellbeing Program may notify the school at the beginning of the school year. Students may request to see the Student Wellbeing Counsellor in a small group, and this will be at the discretion of the counsellor after consulting with individuals and determining the benefits for all students.

When Counselling Begins

- The counsellor will liaise with Primary School parents (for Primary School students) and with class teachers.
- Case notes will be kept in a confidential file, with access limited to the Counsellor and, if required, the Principal or Middle School Coordinator.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Personal information will be collected as part of your child's referral and support process. Records are kept securely and, in the interest of your privacy, are accessed only by the counsellor and, where necessary, relevant staff.

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Limits to Confidentiality

All personal information gathered during the counselling process will remain confidential **except** when:

- It is subpoenaed by a court or disclosure is otherwise required or authorised by law; or
- The Counsellor or Principal/Middle School Coordinator reasonably believes that failure to disclose information would place your child or another person at serious risk of harm to life, health, or safety; or
- Your prior approval has been obtained to:
 - provide a written report to another professional or agency (e.g., GP, external counsellor, psychologist); or
 - discuss relevant information with another person, such as a parent, employer, or health provider; or
 - disclose the information in another specified way.

Consequences of Not Providing Personal Information

If you choose not to provide personal information in the manner anticipated by this consent form, the Student Wellbeing Counsellor at Southern Montessori may be unable to provide counselling services to your child.

Wellbeing Data Collection

During the course of the year, your child may be involved in wellbeing check-ins or data collection by the Federal and/or State governments. The main program we use at Southern Montessori:

1. Wellbeing and Engagement Collection (WEC) run by the SA State Government. The survey asks students in Years 4-12 how they think and feel about their experiences, both inside and outside of school. It includes questions related to areas of development linked to wellbeing, health and academic achievement. More information can be found at [Wellbeing and engagement collection overview and results](#). The survey is not compulsory and parents can withdraw their child at any time.

Learning Support Coordinators

The Learning Support Coordinators work closely with classroom teachers to determine individual student learning needs and develop programs appropriate to identified students. Learning plans are established for students with specific needs. Learning support staff may also work in classrooms together with class teachers to offer individual or small group support.

Medication (Appendix 1)

The health of children is primarily the responsibility of parents and carers. It is their responsibility to administer medication. Staff should not accept responsibility for the administration of medication except where no practical alternative exists. (Administrative Instructions and Guidelines Ed. Dept. SA)

Staff may however, agree to administer prescription-only medication to students under the guidelines detailed in this policy.

Parents / carers who need staff to administer medication must return the MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM. A doctor's signature is needed where long term (more than 1 week) medication administration is required.

Medication must be handed to the office staff in pharmacy prepared package, with completed form. A new form must be completed by the consulting doctor whenever there is a change to the existing management plan. The update and replacement of medication e.g. Ventolin puffer is the responsibility of the parents/carers.

Non-Prescription Medications

These will not be administered and are not to be brought to school by students, unless recommended in writing by a doctor.

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Communicable Diseases

** Also see Communicable Diseases section in Acute Medical Crises Policy

Staff have a key role in preventing the transmission of diseases in the Centre.

While it is often difficult to prevent the transmission of common respiratory (colds/flu) and gastroenteritis infections that occur, every effort should be made to minimise the spread of infection by encouraging:

- Good hygiene practises
- Staff and children to stay at home in the early stages of illness as they are likely to be more infectious and transmit the virus/bacteria to others, via coughing, sneezing and, contaminating surfaces that others touch
- Staff and students to remain absent until they are symptom free if they have a cold or flu; and for at least 24 hours if they have had gastroenteritis
- Parents to seek medical advice if their child has ongoing symptoms of illness
- Follow up for other important infections, including measles, whooping cough, meningococcal and typhoid infections.

Strategies to prevent transmission of infection:

- Hand washing with soap and water for at least 15 seconds before preparing or eating food, after using the toilet, after blowing your nose with a hanky or tissue (disposable tissues are preferred), and after any contamination of the hands with body fluids such as blood and vomit
- Effective cleaning with detergent and water, followed by rinsing and drying will remove the bulk of germs from environmental surfaces (refer to your school/day care policy or Staying Healthy in Childcare)
- Use of appropriate cleaning tools and use of protective personal equipment (gloves, masks) are important and should be easily accessible to clean up spills immediately, to prevent further environmental contamination

For advice on managing suspected or confirmed cases of infectious diseases e.g. measles, mumps, whooping cough, or any infectious disease where two or more cases have occurred, refer to links below.

<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/ohp-communic-1>

<http://www.health.gov.au/casedefinitions>

<https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/infectious-diseases>

Head Lice (Appendix 2)

Head lice occurs sporadically in schools and can be spread quickly to anyone who is closely associated with an affected person, be they friends, siblings, parents, classmates, teachers or others. Whilst not a major health threat, an infestation can cause considerable disruption to families and loss of teaching and learning time.

For these reasons, the Centre:

- reserves the right to check children's hair and to request the support of parents/guardians to ensure that, where necessary, appropriate treatment is given
- will exclude a child with head lice from preschool/school until s/he has received appropriate treatment.
- expects parents and/or caregivers to advise the school immediately if they discover their child/ren have head lice so that the school can check other children in the class/school who may also be infested.

The quicker an outbreak is contained the better for all members of the school community.

Note: The presence of head lice is not indicative of poor hygiene. The Centre has Head Lice pamphlets to inform and assist parents/caregivers.

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au>

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Needle Handling (Appendix 3)

In our efforts to ensure a safe environment, any needle found on or near school grounds will be disposed of in a safe and appropriate manner.

Education

All students, staff, parents and volunteers need to be made aware of potential health and safety risks associated with needle stick injuries.

Students will be instructed not to touch syringes/needles under any circumstances.

Students will be instructed on correct procedure should a syringe/needle be found on or near school grounds.

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au>

Related Policies

Acute Medical Crises Policy

Immunisation Statement

Healthy Eating Policy

Document History and Version Control Table			Based on the Legal Liabilities Guidelines 2011
Version	Date Approved	Approved By	Brief Description
1	July 2019	Board of Governors	Creation of original document
2	Nov 2021	Board of Governors	Review ratified at Board
3	Feb 2026	Board of Governors	Review ratified at Board

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Medication

Procedures

1. Medicines

- Medication will be stored safely at school in the office.
- Prescription medication will be administered in the office as outlined on the prescription instructions.
- Staff will note administration of medication on the RECORD OF MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION form.
- Staff are not permitted to provide medication, except under a medication action plan.
- Staff are not permitted to administer any invasive medical treatment (e.g. give injections or suppositories, remove splinters). Please note however that EpiPen training is part of First Aid Training and staff are permitted to administer this if appropriate.

2. First Aid

- In the event of a student suffering illness or injury, First Aid will be administered.
- First Aid treatment will be recorded on the Injury Form and parents/carers will be notified.
- If the parent/carer cannot be contacted the student will be made comfortable at school.
- If at any stage staff deem it necessary, an ambulance will be called.
- On school excursions, staff will take a First Aid kit and all medication required by students.
- Staff will adhere to universal hygiene practices.

3. First Aid Emergencies

- In the event of an emergency, staff will administer First Aid, call an ambulance as soon as possible and notify the parent/carer.
- Staff are not permitted to transport students home, to hospital or a doctor by private transport.
- It is the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that they have ambulance cover.

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Head Lice

Procedure

Where head lice are detected, the following steps will be taken to control their spread.

- The child will be separated from contact with other children until s/he is collected from the Centre.
- The parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to take the child home where their hair and bedding will need to be treated with a recommended product.
- The Centre will communicate to other parents/guardians that head lice have been discovered with advice explaining how to check for head lice and how to treat it.

When an outbreak of head lice occurs, all parents/guardians are required to check their child/ren's hair and, where necessary, treat the problem.

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Needle Handling

Procedure

If a syringe/needle is found on or near school grounds correct 'Sharps' disposal equipment (located in staff room) should be taken to the site. Under no circumstances should a syringe/needle be carried from its location into the school for disposal. The adult or student finding the syringe/needle shall if possible remain at the site and send another adult or student to advise school staff so that correct disposal equipment is taken to the site.

Equipment

- Latex gloves and disposable tongs.
- 'Sharps' disposal container, or a secure container with a screw top lid (such as a wide necked drink bottle) if a 'Sharps' container is not available at the time.
- Bin with lid and bin liner (plastic or heavy duty paper) for used items – gloves and tongs.

Disposal

- Use disposable latex gloves.
- DO NOT TRY TO RECAP NEEDLE.
- Place the disposal container next to syringe. Pick up syringe as far from the needle end as possible. Place the syringe – needlepoint down – in the disposal container.
- Repeat the procedure to pick up multiple syringes then screw on lid.
- Remove gloves and place in lined bin.
- Seal bin liner and arrange for appropriate disposal, e.g. garbage collection.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water.
- Once secured in appropriate tamper proof container, the container will be stored at in a in a high, preferably lockable, child-safe place until removal can be arranged.
- Syringe disposal containers must NOT be put in normal waste disposal bins.
- When approximately three-quarters full, place lid on securely and take it to Southern Community Health at Noarlunga and obtain a new container.

Needle Stick Injury

- Immediately wash affected area under running water for 15 minutes.
- If injury occurs to a child, contact their parents immediately.
- Contact the Southern Community Health at Noarlunga for further advice and treatment as counselling and relevant blood tests may need to be organised.

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