

EXTERNAL SUPPORT PERSON POLICY

Best practice – Quality Area 6

PURPOSE

The main purpose of this policy is to set clear guidelines regarding the External Support Persons to St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten to ensure every child can have an optimal experience.

This policy will provide:

- guidelines for parents regarding additional onsite External Support Persons for children with a disability or complex needs
- guidelines for the scope of the onsite visits by additional External Support Persons
- procedures for External Support Persons when onsite at the kindergarten
- framework for parents, teachers and relevant External Support Persons can use to improve consultation to support the inclusion of children with disability, additional needs, developmental delay or complex medical needs

POLICY STATEMENT

1. VALUES

St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten is committed to:

- ensuring that all students are treated equally and those with a disability or complex needs are able to participate in the activities on the same basis as other students.
- ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times while also promoting their learning and development
- ensuring effective consultation between teachers, parents and External Support Persons to clearly understand their roles in supporting students' learning and development
- fulfilling a duty of care to all children attending the service
- providing adequate supervision of all enrolled children in all aspects of the service's program

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in day-to-day Charge, staff, volunteers, students, parents/guardians of a child that requires External Support Persons (please see definitions) at St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten.

3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

Background

St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten is committed to providing an inclusive service that allows children of all backgrounds and abilities access to Early Childhood Education. It is a legal obligation of the kindergarten to ensure students with a disability or complex additional needs can access and participate in education without discrimination. The use of integration aides and/or KIS Additional Assistants when meeting this requirement shall not be limited.

The kindergarten aims to use a carefully planned Program Support Groups (PSG) framework for consultation to bring together key people to support the inclusion of children with a disability, developmental delay or complex medical needs.

A key benefit of the PSG is the opportunity for educators to work with families and other professionals to meet children's needs.

Other benefits include:

- giving families the chance to share their knowledge and understanding of their child's interests, abilities and needs
- families can advocate for their child's ongoing needs

- sharing information through regular meetings of the PSG means that planning reflects a common understanding of the child's ongoing learning, development and wellbeing needs
- assist families to feel supported through the transition into kindergarten and into school.

The child's well-being and support will always be a priority for St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten and that is why the framework will be used to ensure the goals of each individual child can be taken into account when planning.

Legislation and standards

List specific legislation relevant to the policy

Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cth)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)

4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority, National Law, National Regulations etc. refer to the General Definitions section of this manual.

Allied health professionals: allied health professionals are health professionals that are not part of the medical, dental or nursing professions. They are university qualified practitioners with specialised expertise in preventing, diagnosing and treating a range of conditions and illnesses. Examples include speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists.

External Support Person: A person who provides support to children with disability / additional needs etc who is not directly employed by the Kindergarten. Examples include Integration Aides, KIS Additional Assistants and Medical practitioners, therapists or other Allied health professionals.

Integration Aide: A support person to provide support to students and teachers, specifically to support students with disabilities in general education classes. Integration aides may be assigned to support a teacher and classroom or to support an individual student.

KIS Additional Assistants: Kindergarten Inclusion Support (KIS) Additional Assistant is an educator specifically in a role to collaborate with Kindergarten staff to provide an inclusive quality program for all children and to provide support to Kindergarten staff to ensure the inclusion of children with a disability or additional needs etc .

Medical practitioner: A person registered or licensed as a medical practitioner under a law of a State or Territory that provides for the registration or licensing of medical practitioners

Other Support Persons: Other support persons engaged by the students' parents to aid in their development or wellbeing who do not meet any other definition.

Onsite session: A approved kindergarten site visit by an External Support Person.

Program support group (PSG): A meeting of key people to support the inclusion of children with disability or developmental delay, or complex medical needs, from the time of enrolment at kindergarten until they move to school. It is organised and run by the early childhood teacher.

5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

Sources

- Department of Education, Children with additional needs in early childhood
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/Pages/default.aspx>
 - Program Support Group
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/needs/pages/psg.aspx>
- The Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Students with Disability
<https://www.dese.gov.au/swd>
 - Positive partnership resource: <https://www.dese.gov.au/swd/positive-partnerships>
- Allied Health professionals, Occupational Therapy <https://ahpa.com.au/allied-health-professions/occupational-therapy/>

Consider other sources such as something from CYDA (Children and Young People with Disability Australia), ACIE (Australian Coalition for Inclusive Education).

Relevant Service policies

- *Child Protection Policy*
- *Complaints and Grievances Policy*
- *Dealing with Medical Conditions Policy*
- *St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten Supervision of Children Policy*
- *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy*
- *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- *Interactions with Children Policy*
- *Occupational Health and Safety Policy*

- *Staffing Policy*

PROCEDURES

The Approved Provider and Persons with Management or Control are responsible for:

- providing the Nominated Supervisor and all staff with a copy of the service's External Support Persons Policy, and ensuring that they are aware of the approved processes and procedures when having an external support person visit onsite at the Kindergarten.
- ensuring that the External Support Person have been approved by both the parents of the child and the teaching staff to support the additional needs of students.
- Ensuring that the External Support Person has the appropriate qualifications (including a WWCC/ Covid -19 Vaccination) in order to interact with the children onsite.
- providing parents/guardians with a copy of the service's *External Support Persons Policy* upon enrolment of their child.

The Nominated Supervisor and Persons in Day to Day Charge are responsible for:

- Liaising with Parents and External Support professionals for scheduling of onsite sessions
- As required developing a Program Support Group (PSG) for a child as follows:
 1. Convening a PSG with all relevant people, who may include:
 - the early childhood teacher
 - the child's parent/carer(s)
 - early childhood intervention professionals
 - a [preschool field officer](#)
 - medical practitioners, therapists or other allied health professionals
 - a support person – if the child's parent/carer(s) chooses to use one.
 2. If required, scheduling the PSG to meet before the child starts kindergarten. This is so the kindergarten can identify, and make, any [reasonable adjustments](#) before the child starts.
 3. If required, developing a kindergarten inclusion support plan for the child
 4. If required, scheduling meetings as required to monitor and plan for the child's learning and development
 5. Encouraging the PSG to shares knowledge and understanding of the child's interests, abilities and support needs
 6. Developing an inclusive program that is responsive to the child's learning and development needs
 7. Identifying existing resources and support already available within the kindergarten
 8. Supporting the child's move into the kindergarten program and later into school
 9. Coordinating services and supports for the child.
- Providing discretionary permission for additional onsite sessions for External Support Persons for an individual student where it is required for the child to access kindergarten on the same basis as other children
- Engaging with External Support Persons who are completing their onsite sessions to ensure they can access required information to make their assessment
- Assisting any External support person to access the kindergarten site as per the procedure for accessing kindergarten

All educators and other staff are responsible for:

- Engaging with External Support Persons who are completing their onsite sessions to ensure they can access required information to make their assessment
- Assisting any External Support Person to access the kindergarten site as per the standard procedures for physically accessing the kindergarten
- If applicable, participating in the PSGs for a child and attend meetings as organised by the nominated supervisor

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Limiting the scheduled onsite sessions during kindergarten hours of each External Support Person for your child to once per term for no longer than 2 hours, unless otherwise approved by nominated supervisor
- If applicable, participating in the PSGs for their child and attend meetings as organised by the nominated supervisor

Integration Aides are responsible for:

- Attending the kindergarten as per their engagement
- Supporting the student with their daily activities and ensuring that the child has equal opportunity to participate in the activities set by the kindergarten program
- If applicable, participating in the PSGs for a child and attend meetings as organised by the nominated supervisor

KIS Additional Assistants are responsible for:

- Attending the kindergarten as per their engagement
- Supporting the staff and students with their daily activities and ensuring that all children have equal opportunity to participate in the activities set by Kinder program
- If applicable, participating in the PSGs for a child and attend meetings as organised by the nominated supervisor

Medical Practitioner, Allied Health Professional, or other External Support Persons are responsible for:

- Limiting the scheduled onsite session during kindergarten hours to once per Term for no longer than 2 hours, unless otherwise approved by nominated supervisor
- Following the guideline below for scope of onsite session:
 1. Use the session to observe the student in kindergarten setting
 2. Use the session to consult with teacher/s and other onsite staff
- Following procedure for accessing kindergarten:
 - Ensuring their onsite visit has been approved and scheduled by the nominated supervisor and appropriate teaching staff.
 - Signing in and out of the kindergarten
 - QR code registration and COVID vaccination certificate has been sighted by nominated supervisor
 - Ensuring WWCC has been sighted by the nominated supervisor
 - Ensuring entry to the Kinder is non-intrusive (i.e. no class disruption)
- If applicable, being part of the PSG for a child and attend meetings as organised by the nominated supervisor
- Reading and complying with other Kindergarten Policies.

EVALUATION

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

- regularly seek feedback from everyone affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness
- monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy
- keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice
- revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required
- notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

AUTHORISATION

The policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of St Paul's Anglican Kindergarten on 21 February 2023.

REVIEW DATE: FEBRUARY 2025