

POLICY

External Therapists

Rationale:

At Sunshine SDS, we support our students to meet their educational goals in a variety of ways, including through the support of our classroom teams and extensive Allied Health and Positive Climate for Learning teams. These teams include a Classroom Teacher, Education Support Staff, a Mental Health Practitioner, Leading Teacher, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapists, Speech Pathologists and Allied Health Assistants. Our teams work allied across the school to support our students' ability to access the curriculum to the fullest. This constitutes part of the legal requirement to provide reasonable adjustments for students.

Aim:

To provide a policy to ensure that every student has the opportunity to receive the best education which includes therapies as required.

Implementation:

The Department of Education and Training (DET) recommends Victorian schools adopt a clear delineation between the student's school-based educational program including reasonable adjustments and extensive school based resources and supports, and any additional therapies or tutoring that parents/guardians choose to pay for which would normally occur after school and outside of school premises.

Principals are able to exercise their discretion to:

- allow an external therapist to, on occasion as required, observe a student in the classroom or playground setting or attend a Student Support Group (SSG) or other meetings to provide recommendations for the student's educational program or 'whole of life' treatment. Any decision of the Principal to allow attendance by a private therapist should take into account the impact on teaching staff and other students;
- in exceptional circumstances, allow a private therapist to provide therapy services that are not part of their school educational program to a student on school grounds and during school hours, to accommodate the student's personal circumstances. This therapy does not constitute a reasonable adjustment that enables the student to participate in their school education (which should be provided and funded by the school) but is instead a recognition that it may be in the best interests of the child to have the services at school. This may be the case where the student's individual circumstances mean that they cannot access the treatment outside school hours; or
- allow parents to take their child to additional therapy sessions during school hours where, for medical or other exceptional reasons, they must take place during the school day. In these instances, normal processes for student absences must be followed.

In all of the above scenarios, there must be prior written consent from the parent and the principal.

All staff must ensure that all required documentation and checks are completed in line with other relevant policies and procedures. Procedures for these individual policies must be updated on a yearly basis.

Review Cycle and Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated as part of a 3 - year cycle of policy review

This policy was last reviewed and updated on 22nd September 2021 and is scheduled for review in September 2024.

Version: Final

Review Date: September 2024

Appendices:

- [Disability Discrimination Act 1992](#)
- [Equal Opportunity Act 2010](#)
- [National Disability Scheme Act 2013](#)
- [Victorian Charter of Rights of Rights and Responsibilities](#)