



SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

VISION

Hamilton Special Developmental School's vision is to prepare young people to become active, engaged and responsible citizens of the local and global community. We endeavour to provide learning experiences that allow our students to reach their full potential in all learning areas. At Hamilton Special Developmental School our aim is to promote a positive culture, which is a safe, inclusive and stimulating learning environment for all.

Hamilton Special Developmental School is cognisant of its obligations under the **Child Safe Standards** (Ministerial Order 870 – effective August 1, 2016) to protect students from all forms of child abuse. To this end, all necessary precautions will be taken to ensure that our school philosophy poses no risk to child safety.

AIMS

At all times Hamilton Special Developmental School (HSDS) will adhere to the DET guidelines for the positive and safe learning experiences. This policy should be implemented in alignment with:

1. DET PROTECT Guidelines;
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx?Redirect=1>
2. VRQA Child Safe Standards;
<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html>

VALUES

We share a united pride in our school and community through:

- Trust,
- Persistence,
- Respect, and
- Integrity.

We maintain a level of high expectations in all of our students and a commitment to bringing out their best.

MISSION

The programs of, and teaching in, our school are of a holistic design to develop the whole student. We are committed to developing the fundamental core areas of their schooling as well as develop them into becoming successful citizens. We will follow the *School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support* framework to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment. In general, due to the complex nature of the needs of our students, our school also believes in following the *Principles for Health and Wellbeing*. The Principles are a reminder of good practice when working with children and young people and are intended to promote, nurture and support the health and wellbeing of Victorian children and young people. Statements that affirm the school's principles are found in the Hamilton Special Developmental School's 'Vision and Organisation' document as well as within other documents and policies such as the HSDS Engagement and Inclusion Policy, the School Strategic Plan and the Parent Handbook.



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OBJECTIVES

This vision will determine the school expectations in all of our documents, practices, councils and committee, community exposure, teaching and learning programs, school initiatives, internal and external interactions, and organisational structures and practices. Our values and expected behaviours will determine all interactions within our school community. Regular evaluation processes will be in place to measure performance in all areas of the school with respect to the implementation of the vision and values of the school. The Hamilton Special Developmental School Staff display the school values by being:

- Appreciative,
- Collaborative,
- Transparent, and
- Respectful.

In all work in the school, we will be asking, “Is this work or process in line with the school vision, values and beliefs?” This question will be a fundamental part of the practice of all staff members in the school and our school council.

Hamilton SDS is engaged in a school-wide purpose and commitment to the safety of our students. Our statement regarding this is as below:

Statement of Purpose and Commitment

Hamilton Special Developmental School considers the **safety** of children as being our highest priority. Our school is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Our school has a **zero tolerance** of child abuse. Our vision is for all students to reach their academic, social, emotional and physical potential. This will occur in a safe environment where they develop the school values of Trust, Respect, Integrity and Persistence and an overall sense of achievement.

Hamilton SDS is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Every person involved in Hamilton Special Developmental School has a **responsibility** to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Hamilton Special Developmental School is committed in its planning, decision-making and operations to:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;



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5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and;
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Furthermore, our school has a child safety statement as follows:

Hamilton Special Developmental School considers the safety of children as being our highest priority. *Our school has a zero tolerance of child abuse.*