27.1 HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

POLICY

This policy establishes a culture of care where wellbeing is integrated into daily operations. We recognize that student progress, staff retention, and leadership effectiveness are deeply interconnected.

PROCEDURE

For Students: Empowerment, Care, & Autonomy
The primary goal is to provide a safe, adaptive learning environment that fosters independence and emotional security.

- **Person-Centered Learning:** Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) must include specific, measurable emotional and social wellbeing goals alongside academic or vocational targets.
- **Accessible Communication:** Every student must have a functional, reliable communication system to express their feelings, choices, and discomfort.
- **Sensory Regulation:** Classrooms and common areas must feature designated quiet zones or sensory rooms to help students self-regulate when overwhelmed.
- **Positive Behavior Support (PBS):** Restrictive practices are forbidden unless in extreme safety emergencies. Behavior plans must focus on proactive, preventative strategies and teaching coping mechanisms.
- **Life & Social Skills:** The curriculum must actively teach self-advocacy, personal boundaries, peer relationship-making, and community safety.

For Staff: Psychological Safety & Work-Life Balance
Staff cannot effectively support students if their own mental and physical health is compromised.

- **Manageable Ratios & Workloads:** Class sizes and staff-to-student ratios must be strictly maintained to prevent physical injuries, emotional exhaustion, and burnout.
- **Debriefing & De-escalation Support:** Staff involved in high-stress behavioral incidents must be given mandatory, immediate relief from duties for a short cooldown and a supportive, non-judgmental debriefing session.
- **Clear Safety Protocols:** Standardized, clear safety procedures to protect staff from physical harm while maintaining the dignity of the students.

For the Leadership Team: Governance, Culture, & Accountability
Leadership is responsible for embedding this policy into the institution's budget, scheduling, and strategic vision.

- **Visible & Accessible Leadership:** Leaders must conduct regular, structured walk-throughs to observe classroom environments and proactively check on staff morale.
- **Transparent Communication:** Establish open, two-way feedback channels where staff can voice concerns without fear of retaliation.

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- **Policy Review & Data Tracking:** Review this policy annually using tracked metrics including student incident reports and feedback from families.
- **Modeling Wellbeing:** Leaders must actively model healthy work boundaries, such as respecting non-working hours for digital communication (emails/texts) and taking allocated leave.

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