



# EXTERNAL PROVIDER POLICY

## PURPOSE

External providers may be engaged to deliver specific activities, support or hold programs inside or outside of school hours. They may provide expertise in a certain activity and can form a valuable addition to a program.

Here at Yarra Ranges SDS, we firmly believe that our students learn best when learning opportunities are embedded in the natural environment

All students have the right to feel and be safe in all programs offered by external providers at Yarra Ranges Special Developmental School (YRSDS), before, during and after school hours.

YRSDS accepts a duty of care to students accessing an external provider during class contact time e.g. an external music teacher contracted to work with classes as part of their teaching and learning program.

## IMPLEMENTATION

- External providers must meet all regulatory requirements including agreement of the schools Child Safe Code of Conduct via the school's contractor management system SAMS 4 Schools.
- All such external providers are required to provide Working with Children cards or current police checks before entering the site. This is managed through SAMS 4 Schools.
- The school will ensure that an adequate ratio of YRSDS staff are present throughout the duration of the visit.
- YRSDS staff will monitor and manage the individual needs of each student including, behaviour support, toileting and assistance with manual handling tasks where required.
- Families wishing to engage external therapy providers such as speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists during school hours to work with their child will need to make an application to the principal keeping in mind the following:
  - It is not always possible for schools to accommodate the various programs offered by external providers within the school setting.
  - Private therapy or other specialised services arranged by families are generally provided outside school hours and not on school premises, as there are risk factors associated with external providers working on school premises including public liability, confidentiality, educational appropriateness, space requirements and the impact these sessions have on the learning programs of the students whilst they are at school.
  - Supervision/Duty of Care, including Child Safe requirements must also be taken into account.
- Families seeking to arrange for external providers to visit the school are required to discuss the purpose of the visit and how relevant information will be relayed back to the family with the principal, fill in the appropriate proforma and obtain principal approval.
- Upon approval the principal will put them in contact with the relevant member of our school therapy team for the following:
  - Collaborative discussion with classroom teacher and speech therapist
  - Supporting continuity of student goals across settings
  - Classroom observation (dependent on current COVID-19 restrictions)
  - The modelling of successful strategies and equipment use in the home environment
- It is strongly recommended that where possible therapy from external providers takes place out of teaching and learning program time, in extenuating circumstances the principal may approve other times depending on the availability of an appropriate learning space.
- Should external therapy occur on site an initial discussion should be conducted with the YRSDS therapists to support collaboration between the settings.

## Related Policies and Resources

Child Safe, Volunteer, Yard Duty Supervision, Duty of Care

This policy was developed in July 2018 and is scheduled for review in July 2022