

0201 Filkem House
278 Helen Joseph Street, Pretoria, 0002.
Tel: 087 711 1235 Cell: 061 729 7343
website: www.eduquestcollege.co.za
webmail: info@eduquestcollege.co.za
gmail: eduquestcollege@gmail.com
Company Reg No: 2021/103077/07
EMIS Reg No: 700401343

STUDENT WELLBEING AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

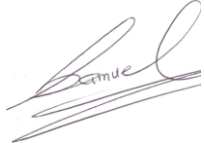
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(Governing Board)**

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Record of Policy Review:

Date Policy was Issued	Date of Next Review	Reason for Review
09 January 2024	08 January 2026 or as the need arise.	to ensure that the policy document remains up to date
Signature		

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

EDUQUEST COLLEGE is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that is a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our values.

Scope

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

Contents

1. School profile
2. School values, philosophy and vision
3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies
4. Identifying students in need of support
5. Student rights and responsibilities
6. Student behavioural expectations and management
7. Engaging with families
8. Evaluation

Policy

1. School profile

EDUQUEST COLLEGE has a belief that all students have the ability to learn, no matter what their socio-economic background or their educational capability. This philosophy is reflected in the school slogan "Together We can Achieve the Extraordinary"

EDUQUEST COLLEGE is a registered and recognised private school based in South Africa, offering a range of educational services to parents of foundation schoolers, middle schoolers, higher schoolers and local community members. With a strong focus on academic excellence and holistic student development, we provide personalised teaching approaches and methodologies, extracurricular activities, personalised academic coaching, academic assessments, and parent-teacher conferences. With our committed team of experienced educators, facilitators, life coaches, Social Workers, state-of-the-art facilities, and a comprehensive curriculum, we empower our students to become confident, knowledgeable, and well-rounded individuals. We are committed to fostering academic excellence and personal development, enabling our students to thrive in their chosen future prospects and contribute positively to community, nation and society at large.

EDUQUEST COLLEGE seeks to provide a learning environment in which students:

- strive for and respect high achievement in all areas
- learn to challenge, discriminate and accept responsibility for their actions
- develop social skills and values based on principles of tolerance and understanding.

There are a myriad of extra-curricular opportunities that will be offered such as leadership camps, spellings competitions, sporting opportunities (inter-school and in school), debating, public speaking competitions, robotics competitions, art shows, environmental team membership and school productions. Student clubs are also available covering a multitude of interests.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

EDUQUEST COLLEGE has a belief that all students have the ability to learn, no matter what their socio-economic background or their educational capability. This philosophy is reflected in the school slogan 'Together We can Achieve the Extraordinary'

EDUQUEST COLLEGE is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and guardians to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

Our vision is to create an environment where students feel valued, empowered, and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their chosen fields and to become the highest and best provider offering quality in education and training through assembling and implementation of the best learning resources to meet the needs of learners, employees, employers, community, nations and beyond

The programs and teaching at EDUQUEST COLLEGE support and promote the principles and practice of constitutional democracy in South Africa, including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

At EDUQUEST COLLEGE our aim is to develop a robust learning community with positive management and engagement strategies that enable the highest level student learning outcomes. In terms of student engagement and wellbeing, we ensure to:

- build a positive and orderly learning environment with clear student routines and high expectations for behaviour and uniform

- build positive and professional staff-student relationships
- communicate clear expectations about attendance, participation and positive social behaviours
- Maintain effective partnerships with key agencies and student support services

EDUQUEST COLLEGE will achieve this by employing both universal and targeted engagement and wellbeing strategies listed below:

Universal

- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and guardians
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing as outlined in our **“EDUQUEST WAY”** documentation
- welcoming all parents/guardians and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- deliver a broad curriculum and ensure that students are able to choose subjects and programs that are tailored to their interests, strengths and aspirations
- teachers at EDUQUEST COLLEGE use an instructional framework known as the EDUQUEST COLLEGE Good Lesson to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at EDUQUEST COLLEGE adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Department of Education, Quality Assurance Providers and Stakeholders
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents and students

- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole- school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through student leadership structures including year level leaders at each year level. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinators, Assistant Principals and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

As part of EDUQUEST COLLEGE's commitment to enhancing Student Voice and participation there are a number of strategies being implemented to support the above.

- create opportunities for cross-age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and school events
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Chaplain, Year Level Managers, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an '**open door**' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Consent education
 - Headspace initiative
- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs, positive body image program)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities)
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

- each year group shall have a Year Level Manager, a senior teacher responsible for their year, who monitors the health and wellbeing of students in their year, and act as a point of contact for students who may need additional support.

- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on LGBTIQ Student Support through the running of a PRIDE support group, celebrating significant days and allowing students to learn more about the acceptance of diversity through our Connect program.
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment.
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on Students with Disability, such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans.
- Members of the wellbeing team will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
- all students from 13 years and above will be assisted to develop a Career Action Plan, with targeted goals and support to plan for their future

Individual

EDUQUEST COLLEGE implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- Teachers at EDUQUEST COLLEGE engaging with student learning data and working with colleagues to plan work appropriate for students at risk.
- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/guardian to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
- developing Individual Learning Plans and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up

- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as counselling and guidance services, other allied health professionals, Social Services Professionals, Child and adolescent mental health services or Child Protection Workers.
 - Re-engagement programs. Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:
 - being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing
 - collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
 - monitoring individual student attendance and developing strategies to support reconnection such as modified timetables, modified work expectations and wellbeing supports.
 - engaging with our district and circuits.
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

4. Identifying students in need of support

EDUQUEST COLLEGE is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies which help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. EDUQUEST COLLEGE will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data

- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- Referrals from community health organisations

5. Student rights and responsibilities

Rights

Students have a right to:

- learn in a safe and secure environment where they can fully develop their knowledge and skills without intimidation, harassment, bullying or cyberbullying.
- participate fully in the school's educational program
- receive reasonable assistance to resolve school-related problems
- receive ongoing communication and feedback about their progress

Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to:

- follow the Code of Behaviour, staff instructions and uniform requirements
- take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning
- display positive behaviours, including courtesy, care and respect for the rights of peers, teachers and all members of the school community
- care for the school environment
- attend school regularly and participate fully in learning programs
- develop into independent learners who set and achieve learning goals and manage resources effectively.

NB!!! All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and guardians treat each other with respect and dignity. EDIQUEST COLLEGE Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or guardians and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team.

Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints and Grievance Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values/Student code of conduct.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy. Bullying will be managed in accordance with our **Bullying Behavior and Prevention Policy**.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, EDUQUEST COLLEGE will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implement positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as detention, withdrawal of privileges or withdrawal from class. Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher-controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- referral to the Year Level Manager
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour support and intervention meetings
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy available on www.dbe.gov.za

The Assistant principal or Principal of EDUQUEST COLLEGE is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law in schools and will not be used in any circumstance at our EDUQUEST COLLEGE.

7. Engaging with families

EDUQUEST COLLEGE values the input of parents and guardians, and we will do our best to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and guardians in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and guardians by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website www.eduquestcollege.co.za
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

EDUQUEST COLLEGE will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school-based strategies as well as the implementation plans and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- incidents data

- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- attendance and absence data

EDUQUEST COLLEGE will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website www.eduquestcollege.co.za
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in admission and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Government Policy and Regulations.