



Strategies to Promote the Participation & Empowerment of Children (Child Safe Standard 7)

Description

Wattleview Primary School ensures children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. We have implemented simple and accessible processes that help children understand what to do if they want to report abuse, inappropriate behaviour or concerns for their safety. All staff at Wattleview Primary School will have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child abuse.

Rationale

Children often do not report abuse because they feel uncomfortable or they do not know how to raise their concerns or allegations of abuse. Some organisations do not have simple and accessible processes assisting children to understand their rights and how to report concerns regarding their safety.

Wattleview Primary School will implement this standard by:-

- Providing children with child-appropriate and accessible information about what child abuse is, their rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy, that no one has a right to injure them, and how they can raise concerns about abuse. Information can be included in our welcome packs, information sessions and posters, as well as on the school website.
- Ensuring information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children. has policies and procedures that are able to be accessed and understood by children with a disability.
- Ensuring information and processes for reporting concerns are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children. A way to help ensure this could include engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisation to review information and processes.
- Considering access and culturally appropriate language, photographs and artwork for Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability when drafting communications materials.
- Translating school information (including information about children's rights, child safe policies, statements of commitment and reporting and response procedures) into relevant community languages, including relevant Aboriginal languages if appropriate.
- Gathering feedback from children, for example through surveys, focus groups, story time and social media, about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and implement improvements based on this feedback.
- Enabling children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them, and on child safe policies, reporting and response procedures, and acknowledge and act upon these where possible. For example, views could be gathered through suggestion boxes and feedback sessions
- Ensuring services are accessible for people with a disability, for example provide appropriate communication aids such as hearing loops if required.
- Training relevant staff and volunteers on methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation.
- Ensuring Aboriginal children are accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.
- Encourage participation and empowerment of children in other school activities, such as decision making.
- Raising awareness in the community about children's rights, for example through staff conversations with families and communications such as websites and newsletters.

- Standards of behavior for developing healthy and respectful relationships will be delivered via our Respectful Relationships Program which will be included in our Quality Beginnings Program, Our daily Learning Community Values discussions and following the guidelines outlined in the DET Healthy Relationships Program.

We aim to successfully implement this standard so that Wattleview Primary School is a school in which:

- reporting procedures for when a child feels unsafe are accessible for all children
- children understand what child abuse is, and their rights (age appropriate)
- children understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation, a trusted adult and external bodies (for example, the police)
- children feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns
- children feel empowered to contribute to the school's understanding and treatment of child safety
- children's reports of concern are responded to appropriately
- all staff understand how to empower children and encourage their participation

Resources will include:

School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS)

As a new school, the school intends to make central to the positive and safe culture of the school, the SWPBS framework. It is an evidence-based framework for preventing and responding to student behaviour. It aims to create a positive school climate, culture of student competence and an open, responsive management system for all community members. A team of teaching staff will be professionally developed through the SWPBS resource as a priority.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/wholeschoolengage.aspx>

The Personal and Social Capability curriculum aims to develop knowledge, understandings and skills to enable students to:

- recognise, understand and evaluate the expression of emotions
- demonstrate an awareness of their personal qualities and the factors that contribute to resilience
- develop empathy for and understanding of others and recognise the importance of supporting diversity for a cohesive community
- understand how relationships are developed and use interpersonal skills to establish and maintain respectful relationships
- work effectively in teams and develop strategies to manage challenging situations constructively.

Other resources and programs to support the Child Safe Policy and to be compliant with Ministerial Order 870 will be considered and included as the school opens, grows and evolves.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's yearly cycle or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

Certification

- This policy was endorsed by School Council at the meeting held on **July 2020**
- This policy was endorsed by Education committee at the meeting held on **July 2020 – Review July 2021**

Signed.....

Signed.....

Principal

School Council President