

SOUTH YARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD SAFE STANDARD 7

PROMOTING PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN

Description

South Yarra Primary School ensures children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. South Yarra Primary School has 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 have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child abuse.

How South Yarra Primary School promotes participation and empowerment of children:

- We provide 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 is included in welcome packs, information sessions and posters, as well as on websites and social media. We have 'Life Education' van visit the school annually to deliver their programs focussed on safety for students across all year levels. Lessons are also structured to support the Life Education Van visits.
- We ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children through strong relationships with teachers, class norms, class meetings, circle time, and discussions focussed on key messages in the PROTECT poster displayed in all classrooms.
- We have access to professionals through DET (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.
- We gather feedback from children, for example in the Attitude to School survey, focus groups, circle time and social media, and from our Junior School Council and Year 6 Student Leaders about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and we then implement improvements based on this feedback.
- We enable 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 are gathered through suggestion boxes, feedback sessions, "Day for Daniel"
- We ensure services are accessible for people with a disability, for example provide appropriate communication aids such as hearing loops, provide access to DET psych / Speech specialists, outsource specific cases to agencies – OnPsych, Family Life, Oz Child, Emerge Support, BayCISS, DHHS etc.
- We ensure Aboriginal children are accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.
- We promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- We promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- We promote the safety of children with a disability
- We encourage participation and empowerment of children in other organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making. For example, student leadership positions, assembly presentations and Junior School Council.

- We raise awareness in the community about children's rights, through staff conversations with families and communications via our website website, the newsletters, at information evenings, parent teacher meetings, School Council,PFA etc.

By successfully implementing these strategies, South Yarra Primary School ensures:

- 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 organisation's understanding and treatment of child safety
- children's reports of concern are responded to appropriately
- staff understand how to empower children and encourage their participation.

THIS DOCUMENT WAS APPROVED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL IN MARCH 2019.