



Bairnsdale Primary School

Strategies to promote child participation and empowerment.

Standard 7

DESCRIPTION

Bairnsdale Primary School ensures children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. Bairnsdale 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 Bairnsdale 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 (PROTECT), as well as on our website.
- We ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children.

For Example:

- We gather feedback from children via student perception survey, circle time and year level meetings 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.
- We ensure services are accessible for all students by providing appropriate communication aids and provide access to Kids Helpline, DET psychologist / speech specialists, connect specific cases to agencies – Child First, Berry Street Child and Family Services, DHHS etc.
- Encourage participation and empowerment of children in other organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making. For example – Student Leadership positions, assembly presentations.
- We raise awareness in the community about children's rights, through staff conversations with families and communications such as our website, newsletters, information evenings, Parent/Student/Teacher meetings, School Council, Parents Club etc. ○ We have the 'Life Education' van visit the school biennially. The Life Ed. program includes personal safety for students, and healthy and respectful relationships.
- Our social-emotional teaching and learning programs incorporate Protective Behaviours, Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships, SWPBS and Year 5/6 Puberty Education.

By successfully implementing these strategies Bairnsdale 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 or 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.
- the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is promoted
- the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds is promoted
- the safety of vulnerable children and children with a disability is promoted.

REVIEW CYCLE:

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Review Date: 2021