

Child Safe Standard 7

St Albans Primary School Empowerment and Participation of Children Strategic Plan

Rationale

St Albans Primary School has a whole school approach to empowerment and participation of students. Empowerment – by helping the children have their say and, Participation – by giving them an opportunity to have a say about issues and concerns that affect them.

Becoming a Child Safe school means developing strategies to communicate and engage with all children who are involved with our school. It is important to ask our children when they feel safe, and when they feel unsafe.

As 'Trusted Adults' we ensure that our children's voices are heard, respected and valued. We encourage, listen and support our children when they speak up about issues of safety and wellbeing.

By enabling the participation of our children in our school we are:

- demonstrating our commitment to upholding the rights of children
- strengthening the commitment of children in our school
- building the communication and leadership skills of children – Student Leaders, JSC and Peer Mediators
- building cultural understanding and respect
- enhancing the safety of children

We teach our children about their rights, recognise what abuse is and understand it is not okay and that they can do something about it (age appropriate).

We talk to our children about safety; both physical (the environment around them) and psychological (feeling, valued, respected and cared for).

At St Albans Primary School we have a whole school approach to promoting the participation and empowerment of children through our delivery of the school developed programs (aligned with the Victorian Curriculum), policies and procedures. We work on the premise of primary prevention in giving our children strategies through the following whole school programs/approaches/policies:

- Digital Citizenship and Policy
- Sexuality Education and Policy
- Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships
- Drug Education and Policy
- Better Buddies and Policy
- Transition and Policy
- Mental Health – KidsMatter and Policy
- Behaviour Management and Policy
- Student Attendance Policy
- Student Engagement Policy

As a school, we have implemented strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children in our school such as:

- 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
- ensuring information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children, for example by having procedures that are able to be accessed and understood
- ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children
- consider 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 organisational information such as School Newsletter into relevant community languages, including relevant Aboriginal languages when required
- gather feedback from children through surveys such as the Student Attitude to School Survey regarding their connectedness to peers, safety and wellbeing and implement improvements based on this feedback
- enable children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them,
- provide professional learning for staff on methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation
- raising awareness in the community about children's rights, for example through staff conversations with families and communications such as websites and newsletters

St Albans Primary School prides itself on being a 'Visible Learning' school, where children are able to articulate what they are learning, how they know they will be successful, how well they are going and what their next steps are for learning. Students are involved in their education, engaging them in their learning and assessment. Students are empowered to learn by setting individual learning goals. These goals are developed, reviewed and monitored in collaboration with the classroom teacher and Educational Support Officer (where applicable). The goals are directed at their specific learning needs, to enable them to grow and improve.

Students refer to the six Effective Learner Qualities (ELQ) when engaged in learning tasks. These are as follows:

- Self-aware
- Determined
- Persist
- Use Feedback
- Reflect
- Connect

These ELQs are student-centred and were created with the whole school community. The ELQs are different from our school values, in that they are specific characteristics that help the students become more effective learner. The six ELQs are explicitly taught, are linked to lessons and recognised in student awards at St Albans Primary School.

The Visible Learning philosophy at St Albans Primary School allows every student to be empowered and to participate in their education. They are critically engaged in their learning, their progress and their next steps for learning.

Resources to support standards of behaviour for students attending the school

Student Engagement Policy

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

Sexuality Education

Catching On-line

Safe Schools Hub for Students

<http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au/home>

Healthy Together Achievement Program

<http://www.achievementprogram.healthytogether.vic.gov.au/>

KidsMatter

<http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary>

Building Resilience: A model to support children and young people

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/departments/Pages/resilienceframework.aspx>

Resources to support child abuse awareness and prevention

Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum

- Government schools see: <https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/pages/Teacher.aspx>
- (Edumail password is required before searching Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum)
- Parents see: <http://education.qld.gov.au/parents/school-life/child-safety-curriculum.html>

Child Wise Personal Safety Education Program

<http://www.childwise.org.au/page/21/wise-child-protective-behaviours>

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

This Code of Conduct was ratified by the Keilor Views School Council on 16th August, 2018