



Strategies for Participation & Empowerment of Students

Child Safe Standard 7

An Annual Action Plan and Timeline for the introduction and consolidation of actions promoting student voice and the practical delivery of age appropriate, child safety at school.

Action	Standard 7: Descriptors	Personnel	Due Date
TERM 1 - 2019			
Staff Induction - Child Safety Policies and Procedures delivered to staff at Induction Meeting. Identify staff coordinator of student council and select Termly Child Safety Celebration Days.	3.1 5.1	Teaching Staff Wellbeing Coordinator Principal Admin	TERM 1 WEEK 1 27/01/19
'Respectful Relationships' Curriculum lessons begin in classroom, incorporating student safety messages in class and aligned with 'Learning to Learn' and 'Significant 72' programs.	1.2 2.4 2.5 4.1 5.1	Wellbeing Coordinator Teaching Staff	TERM 1 WEEK 2 06/02/19 (Ongoing)
Wellbeing Co-ordinator & School Chaplain (Pastoral Care Worker) begin working Thursdays. Available for 1-1 meetings with students (referrals required).	5.2 6.1	Wellbeing Coordinator Chaplain	TERM 1 WEEK 2 07/02/19 (Ongoing)
Establishing School Council, complete with a Child Safety Representative.	1.1 1.2 3.1 3.3 4.1	Principal (CPO) Student Council: - <i>Reps TBA</i>	TERM 1 WEEK 3 13/02/19
Design a flowchart for complaints & grievances for students at staff meeting.	1.3 2.4 6.1	Teaching Staff Principal Admin	TERM 1 WEEK 4 22/02/19
Investigating school code of conduct and adapting into a child-friendly powerpoint presentation. - Trusted adults - Feeling safe	1.2 3.2 4.2	Principal (CPO) Student Working Party: - <i>Hannah, Heston, Austin, Beau, Jensen, Eli & Josh W</i>	TERM 1 WEEK 5 25/02/19
Student Wellbeing Surveys - Administered by classroom teachers. Wellbeing coordinator to release on the website for access.	3.1 4.1 5.2 6.2	Wellbeing Coordinator Teaching Staff	TERM 1 WEEK 5 27/02/19
School Council Meeting: - Student appraisal of flowchart for complaints & grievances for students - Assess child-friendly powerpoint presentation.	1.1 1.2 3.1 3.3 4.1	Principal (CPO) 2019 Student Council: - <i>Jasmine, Hannah, Grace, Heston, Maddison, Jensen, Pheobe, Jimmy, Eli & Charlotte</i>	TERM 1 WEEK 5 28/02/19
Sharing of examples of child friendly versions of child safety policies, code of conduct powerpoint and complaints and grievances flowchart to school community.	3.2 6.1	Principal (CPO) 2019 Student Council	TERM 1 WEEK 6 04/03/19

Student written 'Child Safety' article written for newsletter.	6.1 6.2	Students Teaching Staff	TERM 1 WEEK 6 05/03/19 (Ongoing)
Bullying, No Way! National Day of Action (NDA) https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/NationalDay	1.2 1.2 1.3 2.5 6.1 6.2 6.3	Students Teaching Staff Principal (CPO)	TERM 1 WEEK 7 15/03/19
School Council Meeting	1.1 1.2 3.1 3.3 4.1	Principal (CPO) 2019 Student Council	TERM 1 WEEK 9 02/04/19
TERM 2			
Begin with Staff and students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> understanding the rights of children Understanding the school's child safe policy and code of conduct Senior students share information with younger students considering how to present it. Eg. poster, power point, pamphlets 			
School Council Meeting		Principal (CPO) 2019 Student Council	
Student decision making as to final draft child friendly policy		Students Teacher assistance	
Displaying of child friendly policies around school, website etc		Maintenance Man to hang them on the school fence	
Teaching Respectful Relationships Program		Classroom teachers Develop a Scope & Sequence for teaching this topic	
Teaching Relationships and Sexuality		Classroom teachers Scope and Sequence to match R Relationships	
School Council Meeting		Principal (CPO) 2019 Student Council	
Student election of student leaders		Students/staff	
Buddy System Year 6 with Foundation		Foundation Teacher/ Year 6 teacher	
Offering alternative play choices Student led clubs		Wednesday Wilderness STEM, Reading, Drawing clubs, teacher supervision	
Mission Day Year 5/6		Teacher and Year 5/6 students choose activities for Mission Day	
Child Friendly Behaviour Management Policy		Teachers and students	
Student Wellbeing Surveys		Wellbeing Leader and Teachers Students	

Appendix 1:

St Joseph's School, Coleraine

Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order 870 - 2016)



Standard 7– Participation & Empowerment of Children

INTRODUCTION

St Joseph's School endorses Catholic beliefs and practices and is committed to the protection of all students. As a faith community, we promote participation and empowerment of the young people who live, work and learn under our care.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT

"I have come that you may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

St Joseph's Primary School acknowledges that a significant power in balance exists between children and adults and actively engages students in conversations relating to Child safety to ensure their voice is heard.

The School seeks student engagement in conversations relating to Child Safety and development of effective strategies by:

- ❖ Consulting directly with students and young people about what they think makes their school safe.
- ❖ Giving students information about the standards of care that they are entitled to.
- ❖ Giving children information regarding their rights.
- ❖ Teaching students how to raise concerns and, make complaints or let someone know if they feel unsafe
- ❖ Regularly checking with students & parents that they are aware of relevant Child Safety Policies & Procedures and that the Child Safety culture is visible.

St Joseph's Primary School works with students to ensure that they are empowered to understand their rights, recognise what abuse is and encourage them to speak up when they feel uncomfortable or afraid.

Some strategies adopted by the school to engage student and young people in conversation regarding Child Safety include:

Standard 7: Key Aspects	Standard 7: Descriptors
1.) Establishing what safety means	1.1) Ensuring that the physical environment is safe, warm & friendly towards students and young people. 1.2) Discussing with students, in an age appropriate manner, what makes them feel safe and when do they feel unsafe. 1.3) Identifying, recognising and responding to abuse, risk and neglect
2.) Educating students & young people about their rights	2.1) Running informal educational sessions on the ' Convention of the Rights of a Child '. 2.2) Teaching students and young people that for every right that they enjoy they need to meet its corresponding responsibility. 2.3) Undertaking activities on 'rights' as opposed to 'wants'. 2.4) Ensuring that behavior expectations are clearly communicated to all key stakeholders and are evidenced in policies and procedures 2.5) Examining and building positive, acceptable and appropriate relationships between children and adults

3.) Giving students a voice: Including children in policy development	3.1) Consider student perspective or seek input from them on all aspects of Child Safety in formal school documentation (surveys, forums, maps, etc). 3.2) Incorporate their opinions and suggestions into key documents and, when applicable the school's Code of Conduct. 3.3) Running small, student focused, discussion groups or councils
4.) Encouraging students and young people to develop their own Code of Conduct	4.1) Asking students and young people to consider what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. This includes behaviours of adults toward students, of students towards adults and of students towards each other. 4.2) Establish and maintain a child 'friendly' Code of Conduct, written by children for children.
5.) Implementing a curriculum to support student wellbeing	5.1) Incorporate programs and resources such as 'Bounce Back', 'Kids Matter, 'Respectful Relationships'' and 'Life Education' to build resilience, social/emotional awareness and empowerment. 5.2) Engaging professionals such as a Wellbeing Co-ordinator, Pastoral Care Worker and/or Psychologist to support students, staff and families. 5.3) Utilising CEO Ballarat's, Religious Education resource, 'Relationships and Sexuality Education' policies and guidelines to assist with promoting healthy and safe relationships.
6.) Making links and promoting Child Safety in the wider community.	6.1) Promoting Child Safety visibly around the school 6.2) Communicating student discussions, ideas and feedback around Child Safety to our school community 6.3) Inviting the community to take part in Child Safety initiatives

INCLUSION OF CULTURALLY DIVERSE AND/OR DISABLED SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

St Joseph's School respects cultural differences and variance in parenting practices due to personal, cultural or religious beliefs. The School does not; however, accept that these differences reduce a child's right to be safe or the School's responsibility to protect them from harm.

St Joseph's Primary School promotes safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds by:

- Demonstrating a 'zero tolerance' to discrimination.
- Being respectful, inclusive & welcoming of families from a wide range of backgrounds.
- Recognising times of importance to different cultures.
- Ensuring the school's physical environment incorporates a range of cultural elements that promote and embrace cultural diversity.
- Employing, where possible, Staff Members that represent diversity within the local community.
- Actively seeking out and talking to families about how they can be involved in child safety.
- Providing incursions/excursions that allow students to interact with diverse cultural groups or individuals in a range of educational experiences.

St Joseph's Primary School promotes the safety of children with disabilities by:

- Acknowledging that children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and ensures that its risk management process considers their needs.
- Demonstrating a 'zero tolerance' to discrimination.
- Ensuring that the physical environment does not pose access difficulties.
- Being responsive to families regarding specific measures that may be required to ensure the safe participation of children with disabilities.
- Supporting Staff Members, other children & their families to understand and be inclusive of people with disabilities.

- Considering how children with a disability and their families can be encouraged to participate in a safe environment

Appendix 2:



The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services or facilities for children to have strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children. Your organisation may already have existing strategies. This resource is designed to assist organisations to promote the participation and empowerment of children who use their services or facilities.

Understanding safety

‘Safety’ can be interpreted in a number of ways. Children often perceive safety in relation to their physical environment and while this is useful, children must also be able to identify other elements of safety such as abuse and inappropriate behaviour.

Staff and volunteers should talk to children about safety in age-appropriate terms that are easily understood. This includes using simple concepts and plain language that matches the child’s age and abilities. Recognise that there will be differences between the children in your organisation and that a ‘one size fits all’ approach may not be effective.

Your organisation should ensure that information for children and processes for how to report concerns are accessible and appropriate for all children including Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability. Where appropriate, organisations should translate information (including information about children’s rights, child safe policies and reporting and response procedures) into relevant community languages.

Empowering children

Educating children about their rights is an effective way for organisations to promote the empowerment of children. Organisations should provide children with information about acceptable standards of behaviour and appropriate relationships so that children know what can be expected from staff and volunteers in your organisation. Children should be aware of their rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy and that no one has the right to injure them. Information about children’s rights and complaints processes should be provided in welcome packs, information sessions, posters and on social media.

Your organisation should raise awareness about children’s rights both within the organisation and in the community. This could be achieved through staff conversations with children and families, as well as via communications such as websites and newsletters. Importantly, empowering children is an ongoing process and organisations must make a continued effort to ensure that children and their families are kept informed and involved.

Seeking feedback from children

Children are more likely to raise concerns about feeling unsafe if they feel that they are valued and listened to. Your organisation should encourage children to express their views and make suggestions about service delivery, including safety concerns. Consider and, where possible, act on what they say. Feedback may be gathered through suggestion boxes, surveys, focus group, story time and via social media. Children provide a unique insight and their contributions must be sought by your organisation.

Your organisation should promote the participation of children in organisational activities such as planning and decision making. Children should be involved in the development or review of child safety policies and procedures to ensure that their needs and requirements are met. Any planned activities must be age appropriate and child friendly. This may include running small discussion groups where children are asked for their ideas and suggestions in a positive environment.

Children should feel that their views are taken seriously by your organisation. Staff and volunteers must listen to what is being said without judgement and acknowledge that a child's views are likely to differ from those of an adult. It is important to build trust with children by being sincere and following through on any promises made. This will show children in your organisation that they are valued and that your organisation can be relied upon.

Organisations should encourage children to speak up and where a concern is raised, this must be responded to appropriately. Where an allegation of abuse or serious neglect is made by a child, staff and volunteers should provide support and reassure the child that you are taking what they are saying seriously and that they are doing the right thing in coming forward. For more information about responding to allegations of child abuse, please refer to the

[What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made fact sheet](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/what-do-when-allegation-child-abuse-made-word) < <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/what-do-when-allegation-child-abuse-made-word>>.

Further information

Further information about the [Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>> can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) website. This includes additional resources that have been designed for organisations that are funded and/or regulated by the department. In particular, an [overview of the Victoria Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word) <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word>> has information to help organisations to understand the requirements of each of the Child Safe Standards.

All organisations may also refer to the information and resources available on the [Child Safety page](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/) <<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/>> on the Commission for Children and Young People's website.

Disclaimer

This resource provides general guidance only on the Child Safe Standards. The department does not guarantee that the examples provided in this document are sufficient for the purposes of an organisation's compliance with department's website.