



## Mackellar Primary School Empowerment and Participation of Children Strategic Plan

### Child Safe Standard 7

#### Rationale

Mackellar 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

At MPS, we teach our children about their rights, to 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 MPS 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
- Building Resilience - Social and Emotional Learning and Policy
- Drug Education and Policy
- Better Buddies and Policy

- Transition and Policy
- Mental Health – Kids Matter 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 abuse 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
- ensuring information and processes for reporting concerns are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children
- 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 organisational information such as School Newsletter into relevant community languages, including relevant Aboriginal languages when required
- gathering feedback from children through surveys such as the Student Attitude to School Survey and Kids Matter surveys, regarding their connectedness to peers, safety and wellbeing and implement improvements based on this feedback
- enabling children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them,
- providing 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.

MPS 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.

The Visible Learning philosophy at Mackellar 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 Mackellar Primary School students:

**Student Engagement Policy**

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

**Sexuality Education**

Catching On-line

**Body Safety Australia**

<http://www.bodysafetyaustralia.com.au>

**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>

**The Resilience Project**

<http://theresilienceproject.com.au/schools/>

**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

**Educate to Empower**

<http://e2epublishing.info>

**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>

**Evaluation**

*This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, following a significant incident if it occurs or if guidelines change. 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 policy was ratified by School Council on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016

Reference: Child Safe Standards Toolkit

