

EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN STRATEGIC PLAN

RATIONALE:

Barwon Heads Primary School has a whole school approach to the empowerment and participation of students. Empowerment – by encouraging and valuing student voice, Participation – by providing opportunities for students 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 – through our Student Leaders, Junior School Council, Buddies and Peer Mediator programs
- Building cultural understanding and respect
- Enhancing the safety of children

We teach our children about their rights and the school values, to support them 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 Barwon Heads Primary School our whole school approach in promoting the participation and empowerment of children comes through our delivery of a rigorous guaranteed and viable curriculum (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:

- Internet Use and Social Media Policy
- Sexuality Education and Policy
- Building Resilience - Social and Emotional Learning and Student Wellbeing Policy
- Drug Education and Policy
- Buddies and Peer Mediators Programs and Student Wellbeing Policy
- Transition process and Student Wellbeing Policy
- Mental Health – Student Wellbeing Policy
- Behaviour Management Process and Policy
- Student Attendance Policy
- Student Engagement Policy
- Lunchtime activities

As a school, we implement strategies such as the following to promote the participation and empowerment of children:

- 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
- Ensure 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 all 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, when required
- Gathering 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

Barwon Heads 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 the Teaching and Learning Coach (where applicable). The goals are directed at their specific learning needs, to enable them to grow and improve.

Our aim is to equip our students for the future – through the provision of:

- high expectations
- positive attitudes
- diverse opportunities
- an organisational culture of student safety and well being

Students and teachers refer to the school values when engaged in learning. These are as follows:

- Respect
- Resilience
- Community
- Teamwork
- Co-operation
- Excellence

These values are student-centred and were created with the whole school community. The four values are explicitly taught, are linked to lessons and recognised in student awards at Barwon Heads Primary School.

Barwon Heads' evidence-based approach 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.

Regular review

This document will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. Resources to support standards of behaviour for students attending the school

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>

PROTECT

