



# St. Paul's Primary School

## Standard Seven – Participation & Empowerment of Children

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**Child Safety at St Paul's** - We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff, and volunteers. As part of this commitment we have implemented the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#) to help protect children and young people under the age of 18 from child abuse and neglect, including cultural safety for Indigenous children and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

St. Paul's Primary School acknowledges that a significant power imbalance 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. Paul'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:

Consulting & Talking with Students	Child Safe Strategies
Establishing what safety means	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensuring that the physical environment is safe, warm &amp; friendly towards students and young people.</li><li>• Discussing with student and young people what makes them feel safe and when do they feel unsafe.</li></ul>
Educating students & young people about their rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Running informal educational sessions on the '<a href="#">Convention of the Rights of a Child</a>'.</li><li>• Teaching students and young people that for every right that they enjoy they need to meet its corresponding responsibility.</li><li>• Undertaking activities on rights versus wants.</li></ul>

Including students and young people in policy development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek input from students and young people on all aspects of Child Safety.</li> <li>• Incorporate their opinions and suggestions into key policy documents and, when applicable the school's Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Running small discussion groups.</li> </ul>
Encouraging students and young people to develop their own Code of Conduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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 other students.</li> <li>• Establish and maintain a child 'friendly' Code of Conduct, written by children for children.</li> </ul>

**Promoting Inclusion of All Students & Their Families from diverse cultural backgrounds and those with disabilities.**

St. Paul's Primary 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. Paul'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 has a positive image of a range of cultures in terms of decoration & artwork.
- Employing 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.

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

- Acknowledging that children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable and ensuring 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 ensure a safe environment.

**Written and Ratified Oct 2016**

**Reviewed 31 Oct 2017**



**Principal**

# References:

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Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 3 - Code of conduct (including sample code of conduct)*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 4 - Human resources practices for child safe organisations*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 5 - Recruitment practices for child safe organisations*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 6 - What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made*

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Victorian Government Education and Training 2005, *Child Protection Reporting Obligations*

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State of Victoria 2016, [Child Safe Standards](#) – *Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order No. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2.

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