Response to Child Safe Standard 7

Child Safe Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation an empowerment of children

Element 1 Strategies: Standards of behaviour for students attending the school

Are there standards of behaviour in place for students attending the school?

Our school has clear and consistent standards of behaviour for students attending the school. These standards of behaviour flow from our School Values: Learning, Respect, Community & Confidence. The values are referred to by teachers frequently, noted on our school website and are the lens through which we form all our day-to-day interactions. We provide a detailed description of the behaviour that we expect from all students in our School Wide Positive Behaviour Matrix, which is communicated with students, staff & parents.

The Department of Education and Training's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance requires all government schools to develop a Student Engagement Policy. In developing this policy Healesville Primary has:

- worked with the school community to set/review shared values and a vision
- considered if the school environment is inclusive and empowering and provides opportunities for students to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.

Our Student Representative Council, representatives of which are elected from each class, promote their role as facilitators of change, who work with and on behalf of all students, receiving, evaluating and addressing student based concerns. They review and make improvements to the school and provide opportunities for students to share in decision-making regarding student participation, behaviour and environment.

We administer the Attitudes to School Survey each year to our year 4-6 students. This gathers data to support student wellbeing, engagement, school improvement and planning in schools. The survey captures students' attitudes and experiences at school and is aligned with the Department's Framework for Improving Student Outcomes (FISO). We use the data from this survey to consider if the school environment is inclusive and empowering and take action accordingly. This provides opportunities for students to take responsibility and be involved in decision-making.

Through our student leadership teams and our 'Buddies' program, older students role-model behaviour expectations to younger students. This promotes pro-active and consistent student behaviour across the school, and supports the development of students' emotional and social learning.

Student standards of behaviour also extend to online environments. Healesville Primary recognises the importance of privacy and the need for students to be safe and responsible users of digital technologies. We believe that explicitly teaching students about safe and responsible online behaviours is essential, and is best taught in partnership with parents/guardians. At Healesville Primary School we:

- support the rights of all members of the school community to engage in and promote a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment;
- have a Digital Technologies Policy that clearly states our expectations including actions and consequences for inappropriate behaviour;
- educate our students to be safe and responsible users of digital technologies through eSmart.

Element 2 & 3 Strategies: Healthy and respectful relationships (Including sexuality)

Is the school delivering respectful relationships and resilience education in alignment within the learning standards under Personal and Social Capability and Health and Physical Education in the Victorian Curriculum?

Our Healesville School Values promote the development of caring and respectful relationships between students and other students and adults. This includes communicating positively with one another, and staying open-minded to diversity. In conjunction with the School Values mentioned above Healesville PS utilises a number of other strategies to promote healthy and respectful relationships including:

Healesville Primary School has been involved with the Respectful Relationships program since 2020. It forms part of our Positive Climate for Learning initiative and it is part of our primary prevention initiative to reduce family violence. Respectful Relationships promotes respect and gender equality and helps students learn how to build healthy relationships. It prepares students to face challenges by developing problem-solving skills and building resilience and confidence. A whole school approach is adopted as we integrate this program in all year levels of the school and the activities often contribute to our Buddies & Positive Education programs.

The School Chaplaincy Program has been funded by DET for the past 6 or more years. Our Chaplain aim to support the emotional wellbeing of students by providing pastoral care services and strategies that support the emotional wellbeing of the broader school community. Pastoral care means looking after the wellbeing and personal needs of students, not just their academic needs. Information about chaplaincy services in Victoria can be found at:
https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/nscpchaplaincy.aspx

OnPsych services are available at Scoresby Primary School. Our OnPsych worker is an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker and Play Therapist who specialises in child and adolescent mental health. They work with children to address mental health issues, develop resilience, enhance family relationships and adjust to new social circumstances in positive ways.

Is the school delivering sexuality education in alignment within the learning standards under the Personal and Social Capability and Health and Physical Education within the Victorian Curriculum?

Healesville Primary School delivers sexuality education in alignment with the Victorian Curriculum. Utilising a program suggested by the Victorian Department of Education, our year 5 and 6s participate in a series of sessions that cover issues including sexuality, gender identity, bullying awareness and respectful relationships.

Element 4 Strategies: Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention

Is the school delivering child abuse awareness and prevention education and meeting the relevant learning standards within the Victorian Curriculum?

The Child Safe standards are promoted and taught to students in a child-friendly manner. All staff have completed professional development and training on child safety, and have been provided with support and resources to manage and report suspicions and disclosures of child abuse.

Students complete child safe lessons to identify who trusted adults are, and to encourage students to report any concerns or unsafe incidents to trusted adults. Posters and documents are up in every classroom to promote child safety and adults obligations to help children, and to encourage children to disclose abuse.

Students in Grades 4 to 6 complete a student opinion survey on their perspective of child safety, bullying and relationships with adults at our school. Our school has a Child Safe policy, code of conduct and strategies, and a child abuse reporting procedure in place to ensure the safety all children in our education and care. All documents are publicly available on our website for all members of our community to view and use, and to learn from.

Have staff at the school undertaken mandatory reporting training and familiarised themselves with the Four Critical Actions: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse.

So that HPS staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students, each staff member completes Mandatory Reporting training annually:

- understand their various legal obligations to report and take other reasonable steps to discharge the duty of care that may be owed to the child or young person
- identify indicators that a child or young person has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused
- make a report about a child or young person who has been, is being, or is at risk of being abused.

This policy will be reviewed in April 2025