St. Mary's Primary School
Safe Environment
Policy

Purpose
Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance of an environment that contributes to the health and wellbeing of all staff and students.

This policy confirms our commitment to:
- providing a safe, inclusive and empowering school environment for students, families, staff and visitors
- delivering safety education in one or more learning key areas of the curriculum as a part of a whole school approach to health and wellbeing
- ensuring families, students and staff are key partners in promoting a safe environment.

As a health promoting school, we will promote the safety and wellbeing of children, staff and families through learning, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment, and developing community links and partnerships.

Policy statement
Background
Schools should be a safe place for everyone including students, teachers and other staff, families and members of the
local community. The involvement and commitment of the whole school community is required to achieve a culture in
which safe and respectful schools are everyone's concern and responsibility.

It is essential that all schools promote and provide a supportive learning community where all students feel, and are,
safe. Students have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect. School staff also have the right to teach, work and participate in an environment that is safe and supportive. Similarly, parents and other local community members have a right to feel safe, supported and respected in the school context.

Whole school engagement
It is recognised that every member of St. Mary's has an impact on students' health and can contribute to
creating a safe environment. All members of our school community including staff, students, families and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions
Bullying: Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group
directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

The different types of bullying include:

Verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters

Violence - including threats of violence

Sexual harassment - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation

Homophobia and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality

Discrimination including racial discrimination - treating people differently because of their identity

Cyber bullying - either online or via mobile phone.

Procedures
Healthy policies
- Staff, families and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole-school safe environment policy and are provided with information about policy requirements.
- If a student is suspected of being at risk of or experiencing social, emotional, behavioural or bullying difficulties the school will act swiftly to gather relevant information, and establish contact with parents or caregivers to address issues, including problems, solutions, and plans for maintaining safety and wellbeing going forward. Where possible, conversations and actions will take place within a 'restorative justice' context and process.

Healthy physical environment
- The school provides a welcoming and inclusive physical environment, which reflects the diversity and interests of the students, families and staff.
- The school ensures the use of appropriate and properly fitted protective equipment during physical activity to reduce risk of injury.
- The school takes action to minimise hazards from road traffic, particularly during pick up, drop off periods and other high risk times.

Healthy social environment
- The school provides a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment that promotes a culture of respect, fairness and equality.
- The school implements strategies to promote positive and responsible behaviour and to prevent and respond to bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Staff and families recognise that they are role models and are encouraged to demonstrate behaviours that promote safety.

Learning and skills

- Social and emotional learning, safety education and related health messages are incorporated across the curriculum from Foundation to year 6 and are delivered in one or more key learning areas of the curriculum.
- The school provides a curriculum that actively engages and builds students' self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management and relationship skills
- Collaborative group activities that encourage inclusion, participation, team-work and cooperation are incorporated in the curriculum.
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote safe environments and behaviours

Engaging children, young people, staff and families

- Families, students and staff are key partners in developing and supporting safety initiatives and are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies on a regular basis to support safety in the school and at home.
- Students are engaged in developing and implementing safety initiatives via senior student leadership program, whole-school social/emotional learning curriculum, and other curriculum areas., eg. drug education program.
- Staff are encouraged to develop competencies to facilitate engagement of families and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Staff and parents are offered professional development opportunities to develop understandings and competencies with the 'Restorative Justice' approach to discipline and relationships.

Community partnerships

- Staff are encouraged to work with local health professionals, services and organisations to increase the school's capacity to deliver safety initiatives and promote safe environments.
- The school works with local government and other agencies to minimise safety hazards in the surrounding area.

Related documents and school policies

- National Safe Schools Framework
- Cyber bullying Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Success Criteria for Restorative Practices

Monitoring and Review

The Safe Environment Policy will be monitored and reviewed by the staff, school advisory board, student leaders and the wellbeing action team at least once every three years.

Created: 2019
Review: 2023