



ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL ARMSTRONG CREEK

C.4.2.ii CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS – PRINCIPLE OF INCLUSION

Principle of Inclusion

In addition to implementing the Child Safe Standards the school implements principles of inclusion prescribed by the Standards and Ministerial Order No. 870 through our Student Diversity Policy.

St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School is committed to ensuring that the needs of all students including but not limited to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with disabilities or who are vulnerable are taken into account when the School develops and implements its Child Protection Program.

We understand that allegations of abuse that involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from diverse backgrounds or children with disabilities will require varied and particular responses to ensure that appropriate action is taken. The school staff understand the need to make a culturally appropriate and sensitive response to an allegation of abuse in order to overcome any impairments or barriers culturally diverse students or students with a disability may face. In instances where disability, cultural diversity or any vulnerability is present staff of St Catherine's will exercise great respect and care for students and will seek the expert support of Catholic Education Melbourne.

Students with a Disability

The School has an obligation to students with a disability to ensure that they are afforded the same level of educational and pastoral care as any other student at the School and considers how each policy and procedure the School establishes and implements may affect students with a disability.

The School recognises that students with a disability will not only require additional assistance to participate and engage in School activities in a safe and supportive manner, but also that there are specific child protection risks that arise in relation to students with a disability. This may include for example, stricter screening procedures and training for staff who assist students who require help with personal activities such as toileting or dressing.

In instances where a student in the school requires support with personal hygiene, toileting or dressing the manner, time and location of the support will have been fully discussed with parents at Program Support Group Meetings. Generally, it is preferred that parents attend the school to help their child with personal support. If this is not possible, structures set in place will include provision for two adults to be in the vicinity of any personal support for students. This will need to be done in a way that is not uncomfortable for the student.

Students with disability will sometimes have individual support from a school officer with their movement throughout the school and with learning. It is of utmost importance that the school officer assisting students with disability is selected for their professionalism and competence in dealing with vulnerable students.

Students with a disability at the School may also require varied reporting avenues or systems to students without a disability, and the School must take this into consideration when implementing procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse.

When supporting a student with a disability who has been impacted by child abuse, it is critical that the School considers:

- the chronological age, developmental age and cognitive function of the student in order to tailor developmentally appropriate support strategies; and
- the student's vulnerability to on-going abuse when considering the need to make a further report and/or implement further risk mitigation strategies.

Cultural Diversity

Children from culturally diverse backgrounds are children who identify as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis. They include children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent that identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School values and respects the racial and cultural diversity of our students and is committed to ensuring that the backgrounds of all students are sensitively recognised, catered for, celebrated and valued so that racial and cultural differences do not compromise a student's safety and wellbeing.

It is our policy that:

- we identify children from culturally diverse backgrounds when they are enrolled in the School;
- we employ appropriate strategies to ensure the safety of these children as required;
- we encourage participation and empowerment of these children in the development of these strategies;
- we consider these children when developing and implementing policies and procedures related to child protection at the School; and

- we educate our staff about these cultural differences and the strategies and procedures we have employed.

When supporting students from culturally diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander students, or those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, it is critical that the School provides culturally appropriate support. Where possible the School will work with relevant cultural support groups, ensure that confidentiality of the family is maintained and engage an interpreter when communicating with the student's family.

Similarly, when supporting international students who have been impacted by abuse, the School will give consideration to appropriate measures to be taken for the welfare of the students, including additional support where appropriate given that the student's family may not be present to provide support within the home environment.

Students from refugee backgrounds who have been impacted by abuse may also be experiencing trauma, dislocation and loss. Sensitive consideration should be given when determining how to support the student, and their family.

Inclusion

The Mission and Vision of St Catherine of Siena Primary School calls on the school to **ENGAGE-EMPOWER-EXCEL**. It is the mission of the school to create a culture of a caring community that respects each individual and reaches out to all with generosity and compassion. This is the type of welcoming environment that we wish to extend to everyone in our community and especially to those students and families who have diverse needs and who may be experiencing a measure of vulnerability because of their circumstances.

Review

This policy as well as our processes for inclusion needs to be reviewed on an annual basis so as ensure that all issues that arise in the school in relation to matters of inclusion are addressed appropriately.

Drafted: 2019

Review: 2020

*St Catherine of Siena Catholic Primary School Community
promotes the
safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children*

