



Protective Behaviours Policy 1/02/17

Adopted By: Principal

Review Date: 01/02/2018

To Be Reviewed: Annually

Overview

Protective Behaviours, a personal safety program, aims to promote resilience in children, young people, and adults, using empowerment strategies, clear communication, and awareness of “safe” behaviours. Ultimately the aim is to reduce violence in our community and prevent child abuse.

The *Protective Behaviours* program was originally developed as a child abuse prevention program. Today however, *Protective Behaviours* has a much broader application, not merely focusing on abuse prevention but addressing empowerment, communication, self-esteem, resilience, social skills and other life skills. By teaching and promoting these concepts, *Protective Behaviours* helps to prevent abuse, reduce violence and promote life-enriching rather than life-depleting experiences.

All children and young people have the right to:

- Be treated with respect and to be protected from harm
- Feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other young children and young people
- Understand as early as possible what is meant by feeling safe and being safe
- Receive the support of councillors or staff in their in their education or care setting who are responsible for their safety and well being

Staff actively encourage children’s personal safety behaviours in all sorts of situations including:

- Outside in the sun hat policy
- Using the road while walking or riding bike safety education programs
- Being cautious and aware of strangers
- Stranger Danger programs
- Who to go for help if lost or feeling uncomfortable about an event or person
- Protective Behaviours program – Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum

Child protection is a sensitive, challenging area for Schools.

Quinns Baptist College, through the programs K - 12

- Provide educational programs in child protection using the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum (all staff members have been trained in this program)
- Protect students from abuse and neglect and to assist in the recognition of suspected child abuse and neglect
- Provide ongoing support to students within the normal duties of School staff

Aim

Child protection education aims to assist students to develop skills in:

- Recognising and responding to unsafe situations
- Seeking assistance effectively
- Establishing and maintaining non coercive relationships and strengthening attitudes and values related to equality, respect and responsibility

Rationale

All students can be taught to protect themselves from abuse. They are taught to network with trusted adults and be aware that there are people and services to help them within the School and wider community.

Through the programs, students learn:

- They have a right to feel and be safe
- They can recognise appropriate touching and inappropriate touching
- They have a right to say NO to a person who touches them inappropriately or threatens their safety
- They know that it is important to tell a trusted adults about such situations
- They know that help is available to them within their communities

Programs

There are three broad themes in the teaching and learning of a broad child protection program:

1. Recognising abuse - developing knowledge and skills, appropriate to age and stage about what constitutes abuse
2. Power in relationships - building confidence in relationships which are positive and caring, developing skills in establishing and maintaining positive relationships
3. Protective strategies - taking appropriate actions if students feel threatened, given the opportunity to analyse situations, to identify feelings and to explore alternative courses of action and their consequences

A Protective Behaviours Program is implemented as part of the Health and Physical Education Curriculum, although it is integrated into all subject areas. Specific programs followed are:

- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum (Primary and Secondary School)
- PATHS(Primary School)

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Disclosure

If a student discloses or starts to disclose experiences of abuse a strategy described as positive interrupting is put into place, this is done to protect the privacy of the student.

Positive Interrupting is done by:

- Acknowledging that the teacher has heard the student and stopped the conversation before disclosing any further.

- Supporting and gently indicating that the student can talk more after the lesson or at a later time, closer to the time of disclosure is preferable.
- Quietly arranging to see the student as soon as possible.

If a student asks that this be kept a secret, the teacher must:

- Explain that all disclosures of this nature must be reported. All staff are required to report sexual, physical and emotional abuse and neglect where they have reasonable belief to suspect abuse
- Affirm the supportive role of School staff and be helpful to explain to the student that you need to seek help from another adult who is experienced in these matters

A teacher can help a student making a disclosure by:

- Listening
- Saying that you believe what the student has said
- Emphasising that, no matter what happened, it was not the student's fault
- Doing everything you can to provide support and comfort
- Not seeking further details beyond those which have been disclosed
- Not making promises you cannot keep, such as promising that you won't tell anyone or promising the student that the abuse will stop

Support for Teacher and Administration Staff

It is important for Staff to consider seeking support as part of the natural debriefing process after experiencing a difficult experience.

There is a range of sources for advice and support for School staff dealing with issues surrounding child abuse.

These are:

- School counsellor
- Agencies which offer specialised services for specific groups within the community

See Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy
See Code of Conduct for Staff