



Student Empowerment Policy Summary – Child Safe Standard 3

This Summary should be read in conjunction with the policy located on our Policy Connect platform.

Participation and Empowerment of Students

<https://mansfieldrudolfsteiner.policyconnect.com.au/module/262/page/f5a00a21-6a85-4c87-ad06-ca97904b3947.md>

Developing and Maintaining a Child-Friendly Culture

<https://mansfieldrudolfsteiner.policyconnect.com.au/module/262/page/1f993984-34c6-4078-b71c-ceee52be1060.md>

Child safe Pastoral Care

<https://mansfieldrudolfsteiner.policyconnect.com.au/module/262/page/67e36f53-97f8-46f2-b52e-b43c513842b1.md>

Educating Students about Child Safety

<https://mansfieldrudolfsteiner.policyconnect.com.au/module/262/page/361fd149-359a-4aa3-8c54-197e7f4d751b.md>

Policy Statement

At Mansfield Steiner School, we firmly believe in the role of student empowerment in education. We recognise that fostering a sense of empowerment in our students is not only crucial for their personal growth and development but also plays a vital role in ensuring their safety and well-being, in alignment with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Our policy statement encompasses two key aspects: the significance of student empowerment and its relationship to keeping children safe.

Firstly, we emphasise the importance of student empowerment as it enables students to become active participants in their education. We strive to create a nurturing and inclusive learning environment that encourages students to voice their thoughts, opinions, and ideas. By empowering our students, we promote their autonomy, self-confidence, and resilience. We believe that when students feel empowered, they are more likely to engage in their education, take ownership of their learning journey, and develop a lifelong love for knowledge.

Secondly, we recognise that student empowerment is intricately linked to ensuring the safety and well-being of our children, in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. We are committed to creating a safe and supportive environment where students feel respected, valued, and protected from harm. Through our unique curriculum and holistic approach, we aim to educate and empower students to understand their rights and responsibilities and develop the skills necessary to keep themselves and others safe. By involving students in decision-making processes, educating them



about their personal boundaries, and fostering open lines of communication, we strive to create a culture of safety and trust within our school community.

In summary, at Mansfield Steiner School, we view student empowerment as an essential aspect of education. By promoting student agency, we enable our students to become active participants in their learning and development. We also recognize the critical role that student empowerment plays in maintaining a safe environment for children, aligning with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Through our commitment to student empowerment, we aim to nurture confident, compassionate, and resilient individuals who can thrive academically, emotionally, and socially while feeling secure and protected within our school community.

I. Inform children and students about their rights.

Develop a child-friendly policy that outlines the rights of children and students, including their right to safety, information, and participation. Provide training for staff and volunteers to ensure that they are aware of these rights and can support students in exercising them.

Actions

- Annual staff training
- Child safe student-friendly policy
- Student Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy

II. Recognize the importance of friendships.

Develop strategies to encourage the formation of friendships and social support networks amongst students. Create opportunities for students to engage in cooperative learning and group work to build social connections. Train staff and volunteers to identify and respond to students who may be experiencing social isolation or bullying.

Actions

- Use of the 'Friendship Tree' in the Primary School
- Head of Wellbeing Position (Currently Kate Hood)
- Bespoke Class-Specific Interventions led by class teachers and the Head of Wellbeing to address friendship and social issues as they arise (particularly in the Primary School)
- Developing the Self - Annual work on Respectful Positive Relationships
- The curriculum focuses such as (i.e. Year 7 Main Lesson - Care of the Life Processes)
- Year 5 - 8 age-appropriate developmental sessions around puberty and our changing bodies. (Incorporating information around consent)
- Annual information session by the Victorian Police SOCIT team around consent and peer-on-peer abuse.
- Implementation of the Respectful Relationships Program



- Online behaviour, safety, and awareness information delivered through ICT Class and the Alannah & Madaline Foundation
- Class teacher/guardian role
- Parent education, 'Developing the Self' & Lou Harvey Zahra

III. Attune staff and volunteers to signs of harm.

Provide training for staff and volunteers to identify signs of harm and respond appropriately. Create a child-friendly reporting system for children and students to raise concerns about their safety and well-being. Ensure that students are aware of this reporting system and understand how to use it.

Actions

- Class / Guardian teacher role
- Leadership structure for escalation of issues
- Assembly for dissemination of information
- On-boarding that ensures child-safe training

IV. Develop a culture that facilitates participation.

Develop a culture of inclusivity and respect that values the contributions of all students. Create opportunities for student input into decision-making processes, such as student councils or advisory groups. Encourage open and respectful communication between staff and students.

Actions

- Culture of participation driven through our approach to Music, Sport, Camps and Excursions where participation is fostered and expected.
- Senior student council
- Student leadership roles including the integration of CAS IB subject with leadership positions.
- Student submission for Strategic Planning (2023)

V. Provide opportunities for participation.

Develop a range of opportunities for students to participate in school life, such as extracurricular activities, volunteering, or leadership roles. Provide opportunities for student-led initiatives and projects. Celebrate student achievements and contributions to the school community.

Actions

- Diverse opportunities, involvement in plays, festivals and events, cooking, gardening, music, and sport.



- Leadership roles

Annual Review

Policy Actions & Implementation are to be reviewed annually by GC and SLT

Review date June 2023 Glenn Hood – Sent to GC June 2023

Next review June 2024