

Barwon Valley School

Sexual Health and Wellbeing Policy



BARWON VALLEY SCHOOL
TEAMWORK RESPECT FUN DIGNITY SUPPORT

Rationale

Leadership and staff acknowledge the importance of a safe and inclusive environment, which supports the sexual health and wellbeing of all staff and students.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- providing a safe, inclusive and empowering environment for students, families, staff and broader school community
- developing knowledge, resilience and help-seeking skills of students
- delivering a personal development program as part of our social-emotional learning curriculum

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

Policy statement

Background

The goal of a personal development program, within the broader context of social-emotional learning, is to build knowledge, skills, and behaviours that enable young people to make responsible and safe choices. Developing protective factors such as resilience and social and emotional competencies will enhance the potential for children and young people to resist risky behaviours. Young people can make good decisions about their health and wellbeing if education policies, programs and services are available to help them.

Our school supports parents, carers and families in their role as primary provider of information and education with regard to personal development and sexuality.

Whole school engagement

It is recognised that every member of Barwon Valley School has an impact on students' health, and can contribute to creating a supportive environment for positive health and wellbeing. All members of our school community including staff, students, families, carers and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

Definitions

Sexual Health and Wellbeing: For the purposes of this policy and for the Healthy Schools Achievement Program, the 'Sexual Health and Wellbeing' health priority area focusses on sexual health, sexuality and gender.

Sexual health: A state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences that are free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

Sexuality: A central feature of being human that is deeply individualised. It includes sexual feelings, thoughts, attractions, preferences and sometimes behaviour.

Sexual Harassment: is bullying that occurs when a person is subjected to unwanted, aggressive behaviour, teasing, taunting, put downs or discrimination because of their gender, or sexual orientation.

Resilience: The ability to bounce back from adversity in order to lead a healthy and fulfilling life.

Social and emotional competence: The ability to recognise and manage emotions, develop caring and concern for others, make responsible decisions, establish positive relationships and handle challenging situations capably.

Procedures

Healthy policies

- Staff, families, carers and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole school health and wellbeing policies, and are seen as key partners in promoting and supporting positive sexual health in the school.
- Staff, families, carers and students are provided with information about policy requirements.
- The policy is shared with the whole school community with opportunities to provide feedback/input.
- The policy is ratified and reviewed once every 3 years.

Healthy physical environment

- The school provides a welcoming and inclusive physical environment, which reflects the diversity and interests of the students, families, carers and staff.
- School staff are proactive in ensuring an environment that is free of harassment and discrimination, and is safe and affirming for all students.
- Students have access to suitable environments for privacy needs and student privacy is respected.
- We allow students to wear clothing to school that is gender inclusive.

Healthy social environment and culture

- The school encourages the contribution of students, families and staff to a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment
- The school implements strategies to promote positive and responsible behaviour, and to prevent and respond to bullying, discrimination and harassment.

- Staff, carers and families recognise that they are role models and demonstrate respectful relationships and inclusive behaviour.
- Diversity and cultural practices are considered when implementing this policy and sexual health and wellbeing practices. This document broadly outlines what needs to be included in policy to ensure a whole school approach to Sexual Health and Wellbeing.
- Language used is respectful of gender, culture and sexuality and there are avenues for community members to raise concerns about any disrespectful language and behaviour.
- Strategies are used to promote positive and responsible behaviour, and to prevent and respond to bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Students and staff are supported when sexual health, diversity or harassment issues are identified.

Learning and skills

- An age-appropriate, personal development program is delivered from foundation to year 12, across our social-emotional learning curricula.
- Families and carers are recognised as key partners in their child's learning and are supported in their responsibility for sexuality education.
- The school will host a parent information to consolidate and reinforce information regarding physical development, puberty and reproduction
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to deliver and promote the school's personal development program.
- The school curriculum includes sexual health education programs that are developmentally appropriate and respond to diverse student needs, including gender, sexuality, religion, culture and disability.
- Inclusive behaviours are expected for all staff members. School leadership ensure staff feel comfortable and safe to express their gender identity and sexuality.
- SoSafe! Program.
- Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships.

Community partnerships

- Staff are encouraged to work with local health professionals, services and other organisations to increase their capacity to deliver and promote personal development, wellbeing and diversity initiatives.
- The school endeavours to develop referral procedures and pathways to local health and support services when required.
- Sexual health and wellbeing information is provided to families and the wider community, such as information about local support services and resources about sexual health, gender and sexuality.
- Partnerships are established with relevant organisations and health professionals to support mental health and wellbeing practices where appropriate.
- There are clear referral options and pathways for students, staff, carers and families to access support services related to sexual health, sexuality, violence, sexual harassment and discrimination.

- The school is proactive and ensures support pathways are in place prior to implementing sexual health and wellbeing initiatives in order to respond to a potential increase in disclosures

Related school policies

- Staff Health and Wellbeing Policy
- E-safety policy
- Child Protection
- Student Engagement
- Sexuality Education

Monitoring and review

The Sexual Health and Wellbeing 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.

Ratified: November 2019

Next Review Date: September 2022