**Child Protection Education Policy – Pretty Beach Public School**

**Introduction**

It is mandatory to teach child protection education in every stage of learning from Kindergarten to Year 10 as part of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE) K-10 Syllabus. Pretty Beach Public School ensures high accountability to this mandatory requirement, ensuring lessons are taught and registered each year, for every student.

This education aims to assist students in:

* developing skills in recognising and responding to unsafe situations
* seeking assistance effectively
* establishing and maintaining respectful and equal relationships
* strengthening attitudes and values related to equality, respect and responsibility.

Child protection and respectful relationships education is the responsibility of the whole school community at Pretty Beach Public School. It is most effective as part of a whole school approach; therefore, child protection lessons are taught in conjunction with Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) lessons and the school’s anti-bulling curriculum, “Expect Respect”. Parents are encouraged to learn more about these important curriculum areas by accessing further information on the school’s website.

**What students learn**

Through PDHPE students learn about rights and responsibilities in relationships and how to develop and maintain respectful relationships. Students learn to recognise and respond to abuse and violence and develop help-seeking skills and strategies to access support for themselves and others.

In primary school, students learn about the roles and responsibilities in positive relationships and the effects of actions such as bullying and violence on the disruption of relationships. Students learn to form and maintain relationships through developing skills in communication, conflict resolution and strategies for coping with changes in relationships.

The Child Protection Education curriculum materials address three main themes. These themes are integrated within each unit of work.

**Recognising abuse**

Protective skills cannot be used unless children recognise situations of potential abuse or when abuse is occurring. It is important that students develop knowledge and skills, appropriate to their age and stage, about what constitutes abuse.

**Power in relationships**

When discussing power in relationships, particular attention is given to building confidence in relationships which are positive and caring. Skills in establishing and maintaining positive relationships, including accepted cultural practices related to caring touch, are reinforced.

**Protective strategies**

With knowledge about positive relationships and about child abuse, children can take appropriate actions if they are in threatening situations. When learning about protective strategies, students are given the opportunity to analyse situations, to identify feelings, and to explore alternative courses of action and their consequences. For more information about what is taught in child protection education lessons in each stage, see the curriculum summaries (at end of document)

**Why this learning matters**

Students should be taught ways to protect themselves from abuse. They can be ‘enlightened without being frightened’. At Pretty Beach Public School, students are taught how to network with trusted adults and to be aware that there are people and services to help them within their community.

It is important to give students enough information so that, if faced with a situation of potential abuse, they can react quickly and seek protection effectively.

All children and young people at Pretty Beach Public School have a right to:

* be treated with respect and to be protected from harm
* be asked for their opinions about things that affect their lives and to be listened to
* feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other children and young people
* understand as early as possible what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'.

It is important that students at Pretty Beach Public School learn that:

* they should feel safe and have a right to be safe
* some forms of touching are appropriate and others are inappropriate
* appropriate touching can be an important part of positive relationships
* they have a right to say NO to a person who touches them inappropriately or threatens their safety
* it is important to tell trusted adults about such situations
* they may have to keep on telling people until they are believed
* help is available to them within their communities.

Acknowledging and addressing the issue of child abuse can help to remove the secrecy that protects the offender and can help prevent the lasting emotional damage caused to the victims by silence.

It has long been recognised now that interventions are required to help children keep themselves safe from potentially abusive situations. [The Council of Australian Governments’ National Framework for Protecting Australia’s Children](https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/families-and-children/publications-articles/protecting-children-is-everyones-business)(Council of Australian Governments, 2009b) endorsed the need to raise children’s awareness about the risks of child sexual abuse and knowledge to foster protective behaviours which may in turn help to increase detection of abuse. Additionally, The importance of teaching child sexual abuse prevention education is endorsed in international guidelines from [UNICEF](https://www.unicef.org/protection/sexual-violence-against-children" \o "Unicef) and the [World Health Organisation](https://www.who.int/) amongst others.

Learn more about [the importance of child protection education](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/child-protection-and-respectful-relationships-education/evidence-based-practice/the-importance-of-child-protection-education).

**A whole-school approach**

The development of a school environment and culture that models safe and respectful practices and is consistent in dealing with incidents of bullying and violence is as important a teaching tool as the formal curriculum.

At Pretty Beach Public School, education is about preparing children and young people for healthy, fulfilling adult lives, including respectful and equal relationships. Childhood and adolescence are crucial periods for the formation of respectful, non-violent relationships later in life. School programs should provide students with the tools to think critically about real-life situations, and assess and adapt their own values, attitudes and behaviours. Opportunities to address issues in the playground and programs to promote positive and respectful behaviours in the school environment will enhance the child protection education curriculum delivery. These programs could include activities focused on skills development, such as conflict resolution, negotiation and interpersonal skills to empower students to negotiate personal relationships. Modelling as an influence and supportive interactions, such as group work, cooperative learning, discussions, role-plays and behavioural rehearsal are also viewed as effective.

Learn more about how schools can meet their legislative requirements by addressing key [department policies](https://education.nsw.gov.au/teaching-and-learning/curriculum/key-learning-areas/pdhpe/child-protection-and-respectful-relationships-education/evidence-based-practice/policy-and-procedures) that directly relate to child protection education through PDHPE.

**Child protection awareness training**

All staff participate in induction training and/or [child protection awareness training](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/proflearn/cpat/) and participate in an annual child-protection awareness training update every 12 months.

The school registers all staff child protection training as part of WHS procedures.

**Curriculum summary: Early stage 1 (kindergarten)**

* Feelings and body reactions
* Relationships with others
* How people care for each other
* Body parts (private and non-private)
* Changes in body and abilities since birth
* Rights and responsibilities
* Family structures
* Recognising and responding to safe and unsafe situations
* Positive relationships and support networks
* Strategies to stay safe and seek help
* Appropriate and inappropriate touching
* Ways to show respect to others
* Making safe decisions

**Curriculum summary: Stage 1 (years 1-2)**

* Feelings and body reactions
* Relationships with others
* How people care for each other
* Body parts (private and non-private)
* Changes in body and abilities since birth
* Rights and responsibilities
* Groups students belong to
* Bullying
* Recognising and responding to safe and unsafe situations
* Positive relationships and support networks
* Strategies to stay safe and seek help
* Appropriate and inappropriate touching
* Communicating and cooperating with others in a respectful way
* Making safe decisions

**Curriculum summary: Stage 2 (years 3-4)**

* Rights and responsibilities
* Rights and responsibilities in relationships
* Emotions and warning signs in different situations
* Power in relationships
* Male and female body parts and puberty-related changes
* Positive relationships and support networks to manage change
* Gender stereotypes and expectations
* Types of abuse
* Bullying behaviour and strategies to seek help
* Recognising and responding to safe and unsafe situations
* Strategies to stay safe and seek help
* Communicating and cooperating with others in a respectful way
* Making informed and safe decisions

**Curriculum summary: Stage 3 (years 5-6)**

* Rights and responsibilities
* Rights and responsibilities in relationships
* Emotions related to feeling unsafe and ways to manage these
* Different types of relationships and why they change
* Abuse of power in relationships
* Gender stereotypes and expectations
* Different types of abuse including physical, emotional and sexual abuse
* Bullying behaviour, including harassment
* Support networks to seek advice and support
* Strategies to stay safe and seek help
* Actions and behaviours that show respect and inclusion of others
* Strategies to stay safe and seek help including No-Go-Tell
* Actions and behaviours that show respect to and inclusion of others