

## The Implementation Of Child-Friendly School Policies In Elementary Schools

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**Abstract:** This research examines the implementation of the School-Friendly Child (SFC) policy at SD Negeri Sambiroto, a primary school in Rembang, Indonesia. The study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the SFC policy, focusing on its key components, including child protection, inclusive education, and fostering a positive learning environment. The research employs a qualitative case study approach, using interviews, observations, and document analysis as data collection methods. The findings reveal that while the school has made substantial progress in applying the policy, there are significant challenges regarding resource limitations, teacher preparedness, and resistance to change. The school has tried to engage parents and the local community, which is crucial in ensuring the policy's success. Key factors for successful implementation include strong leadership, ongoing teacher training, and effective communication among stakeholders. The study also highlights the importance of continuously evaluating and adapting the policy to address emerging challenges. This research provides insights into the practical aspects of implementing child-friendly policies in schools and offers recommendations for improving the quality of education and school management.

**Keywords:** School-Friendly Child, Policy Implementation, Child Protection, Quality of Education, School Management

### Introduction

This research reveals that the role of basic education is crucial in shaping the character and personality of children as the foundation for developing their potential in the future. In Indonesia, the concept of Child-Friendly Schools (SRA) has become one of the efforts to create a safe, comfortable, and supportive school environment for the holistic development of children. As outlined in Law No. 35 of 2014 on Child Protection, the SRA concept emphasises the importance of schools as places free from violence, discrimination, and bullying while providing

space for children to participate in learning activities actively<sup>1</sup>. A child-friendly school aims to protect children from potential physical and emotional violence and creates an environment that supports their social, emotional, and intellectual development<sup>2</sup>.

The ideal concept of SRA is to create an environment involving all relevant parties, including teachers, parents, and the community, to create a safe and supportive educational space. Ideally, SRA integrates the protection of children's rights by creating an inclusive education system where every child, regardless of their social and economic background, can learn without fear or marginalisation. The implementation of SRA requires clear policies from the government, support from educational institutions, and a good understanding from schools and parents regarding the importance of children's rights in education<sup>3</sup>.

However, the reality in the field shows significant challenges in implementing SRA in Indonesian schools, including at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang. One of the main challenges is the lack of adequate training for teachers on the principles of SRA. Many teachers do not fully understand the SRA concept and how to integrate these values into their teaching activities. This is compounded by the lack of facilities supporting the creation of a child-friendly environment. The limitations in facilities such as comfortable classrooms, safe play areas, and access to teaching materials that align with the principles of SRA are significant obstacles in implementing this curriculum<sup>4</sup>.

Furthermore, although SRA policies have been implemented, not all school elements, such as parents and the community, are maximally involved. Many parents do not fully understand their role in supporting this policy, while some members of the surrounding community are not engaged in creating an environment that supports children's education<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Tim. *Panduan Penyelenggaraan Sekolah Ramah Anak*. Deputi Bidang Tumbuh Kembang Anak Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Kustiah. *Sekolah yang Ramah Anak: Menciptakan Suasana yang Mendukung Tumbuh Kembang Sosial, Emosional, dan Intelektual Anak*. Jurnal Pendidikan Anak, vol. 15, no. 2, 2021, pp. 85-97.

<sup>3</sup> Nurfadilah, R., and A. Sari. "Pendidikan Inklusif dan Sekolah Ramah Anak: Meningkatkan Kualitas Pendidikan Anak." *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar*, vol. 3, no. 1, 2022, pp. 43-56.

<sup>4</sup> Hasanah, R., L. Wuryandini, and I. Kusumaningsih. "Tantangan Implementasi Sekolah Ramah Anak di SD." *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2021, pp. 98-111

<sup>5</sup> Fitriani, S., A. Mulyono, and F. Hidayat. "Penerapan Kebijakan Sekolah Ramah

This creates a gap between the policies in place and their actual implementation at the school level.

Several solutions that can be implemented to address these challenges include increasing training for teachers related to the implementation of SRA and strengthening parental and community involvement. The government and educational institutions can hold regular training sessions to improve teachers' understanding of SRA principles and how to apply them in teaching activities<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, schools need to create stronger collaborations with parents and the community through programs that involve them in learning activities and monitoring<sup>7</sup>. The importance of strengthening the culture of child-friendly schools should also not be overlooked. Johnson & Brown stated that a school culture supporting children's freedom and well-being will create a more enjoyable and productive learning environment. Therefore, every policy implemented should ensure that students feel safe, valued, and encouraged to develop their potential optimally<sup>8</sup>.

This study aims to examine the implementation of SRA at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang, evaluate the successes and challenges encountered, and provide recommendations for improvements. This research focuses on determining the extent to which SRA policies are implemented, the challenges faced, and the solutions that can be provided to ensure that SRA is effectively carried out. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for more inclusive educational policies and strengthen efforts to create truly child-friendly schools in Indonesia.

## Literature Review

A Child-Friendly School (SRA) is an educational concept that prioritises fulfilling children's rights within the school environment, aiming to create a safe, comfortable, and violence-free atmosphere. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection<sup>9</sup> defines SRA

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Anak di Indonesia." *Jurnal Kebijakan Pendidikan*, vol. 10, no. 4, 2021, pp. 22-38.

<sup>6</sup> Widodo, S. "Peran Kepala Sekolah dalam Mewujudkan Sekolah Ramah Anak." *Jurnal Kepemimpinan Pendidikan*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2022, pp. 65-79.

<sup>7</sup> Rumasukun, A., M. Faizin, and M. Apia. "Peran Kepala Sekolah dalam Pengorganisasian Sekolah Ramah Anak." *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, vol. 11, no. 1, 2024, pp. 90-104.

<sup>8</sup> Aisam, M. "Evaluasi Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka dalam Pendidikan Ramah Anak." *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2022, pp. 47-60.

<sup>9</sup> Tim. *Peraturan Menteri tentang Sekolah Ramah Anak*. Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak Kementerian Pemberdayaan

as a school that respects and fulfils children's rights by eliminating violence and discrimination while encouraging active participation in learning activities. This concept is the foundation for creating a safe learning environment for children while supporting their social, emotional, and academic development.

Implementing this concept is closely related to the social-emotional development theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner<sup>10</sup>. In his theory, Bronfenbrenner emphasises the importance of interactions between individuals and their social environment, where schools, as part of the microsystem, can influence children's social and academic development. A positive environment, such as that applied in SRA, greatly supports the holistic development of children, both physically, emotionally, socially, and academically.

Furthermore, the principle of inclusive education, part of SRA, emphasises that every child, including those with special needs, has the right to receive equal and quality education. In *Inclusive Education: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, Taylor states that inclusive education aims to accommodate all students without discrimination, enabling them to participate in all learning aspects actively. This reflects how SRA creates a safe environment and develops students' abilities to collaborate with their peers, regardless of their background or skills.

Additionally, in implementing SRA, teachers play a vital role as facilitators. According to Nasir<sup>11</sup>, teachers are not only conveyors of knowledge but must also be able to guide students to think critically and creatively during the learning process. This aligns with the principles of *Merdeka Belajar* (Independent Learning), launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture, where teachers are free to design learning activities according to the needs and characteristics of their students. However, this freedom still requires teachers' guidance and direction to ensure the achievement of the established competencies.

School management also greatly supports the success of SRA implementation. The principal acts as a manager, ensuring all school elements function well. Sulkowski & Lazarus<sup>12</sup> explain that a school

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Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak, 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Darling, C. *Child Development in the Context of Schools and Families*. Child Development Press, 2021.

<sup>11</sup> Nasir, A. *Peran Guru dalam Pembelajaran Berbasis Merdeka Belajar: Mengarahkan Siswa untuk Berpikir Kritis dan Kreatif*. Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pengajaran, vol. 18, no. 3, 2025, pp. 112-126

<sup>12</sup> Sulkowski, M., and S. Lazarus. "Creating Safe and Supportive Schools."

principal must be competent in managing human resources, including teachers and staff, and leading programs that support SRA policies. The principal is also responsible for creating policies supporting child protection and ensuring each student grows in a healthy and positive environment.

However, despite the expected benefits of SRA in creating an ideal environment, challenges often arise in practice. Setiawan & Kurniawati<sup>13</sup>, in their study of SRA policies in Yogyakarta, found that teachers still face difficulties in understanding and adapting to this policy, as well as the limited facilities that support the implementation of SRA in schools. Therefore, continuous training for teachers and staff is needed to enhance their understanding and skills in applying SRA.

Furthermore, parental and community involvement is also key to supporting the implementation of SRA. Research by Wibowo<sup>14</sup> states that parental involvement in children's education can improve the quality of teaching and strengthen oversight of children's development at school. This aligns with findings from Simarmata & Hidayatulloh<sup>15</sup>, which mention that collaboration between schools and parents enhances the effectiveness of child-centred education policies.

Supervision conducted by the school principal is also essential to ensure the success of SRA implementation. Andriani & Dafit<sup>16</sup> emphasise that school principals should have supervisory instruments to assess the effectiveness of SRA programs. These instruments include various aspects, such as human resource management, facilities, and adherence to existing regulations. Adequate supervision can improve the quality of implementation and ensure that SRA policies are executed according to the intended objectives.

In this context, government regulations and policies also support the success of SRA implementation. Government Regulation No. 78 of

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*Educational Leadership*, 2020.

<sup>13</sup> Setiawan, D., and F. Kurniawati. "Implementasi Kebijakan Sekolah Ramah Anak di Sekolah Dasar Negeri Kota Yogyakarta." *Jurnal Kebijakan dan Administrasi Pendidikan*, 2021.

<sup>14</sup> Wibowo, A. *Kepemimpinan Pendidikan dan Budaya Sekolah Inklusif*. Pustaka Pelajar, 2023.

<sup>15</sup> Simarmata, D., A. Hidayatulloh, and R. Siahaan. "Sekolah Ramah Anak dan Efektivitas Pembelajaran." *Journal of Educational Policy Studies*, vol. 11, no. 4, 2022, pp. 201-215.

<sup>16</sup> Andriani, M., and S. Dafit. "Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah dalam Pengawasan Implementasi Kurikulum Merdeka." *Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan*, 2024.

2021 on Special Protection for Children emphasises that educational units must ensure child protection in schools. Similarly, Minister of Education and Culture Regulation No. 17 of 2017 on National Standards for Early Childhood Education underscores the importance of creating child-friendly schools to improve the quality of education in Indonesia.

## Research Methods

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach to provide an in-depth depiction of implementing the Child-Friendly School (SRA) policy at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to understand the phenomenon holistically, focusing on school policies, curriculum, educator training, parental involvement, and other supporting facilities to realise a child-friendly school<sup>17</sup>. This research also uses a case study design, focusing on SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang as an educational unit currently implementing the SRA policy. Case studies offer deeper insights into the dynamics of policy implementation in specific contexts<sup>18</sup>. The primary goal of this study is to examine how SRA is applied at this school and its impact on the quality of the learning environment and the development of students.

This research was conducted at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang, a private school committed to integrating the principles of SRA into every aspect of its educational activities. The school is located in [insert location] and has a Christian background, which facilitates the application of Christian values in education. The research subjects include the school principal, teachers, students, and parents, who provide insights into the implementation of the policy and its impact on students and families. The principal plays a crucial role in providing policy direction for SRA, while teachers implement the curriculum that includes child-friendly learning approaches. Parental and student participation is also essential for a comprehensive view of the policy's implementation<sup>19</sup>.

Data were collected using three main techniques: in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Interviews with the principal, teachers, students, and parents were conducted to gather information on the policy, challenges, and successes in implementing SRA. This technique is highly effective in deeply

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<sup>17</sup> Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 4th ed., SAGE Publications, 2014

<sup>18</sup> Yin, R. K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Sage Publications, 2014

<sup>19</sup> Simons, H. *Case Study Research in Practice*. Sage Publications, 2019.

understanding stakeholders' perceptions<sup>20</sup>. Participatory observation was used to assess classroom interactions and extracurricular activities and to observe the implementation of SRA in daily activities at the school. Documentation involved collecting data from activity reports, SRA implementation guides, and existing policy documents at the school, which allowed for further analysis of the policy documentation applied<sup>21</sup>.

The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis, which enables the researcher to identify and group emerging themes from the collected data. Thematic analysis is effective in organising and synthesising extensive qualitative data<sup>22</sup>. This process involves coding the data, grouping information based on themes, and drawing conclusions relevant to the research objectives. Source triangulation was used to ensure data validity by comparing findings from various sources of information<sup>23</sup>. Member checking was also used to validate preliminary findings with key informants.

This research was conducted while adhering to research ethics principles, including informed consent, confidentiality of data, and ensuring that participation in the study was voluntary. According to ethical research guidelines, each informant was provided with an explanation of the study's purpose and their right to withdraw at any time without consequence<sup>24</sup>. With this approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive picture of implementing the Child-Friendly School policy at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang and identify the challenges and solutions in its execution. This research is expected to contribute significantly to developing inclusive and child-friendly education policies in various school contexts.

## Results and Discussions

The results of this study indicate that SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang has successfully implemented the Child-Friendly School (SRA) policy effectively. This school has created a safe, inclusive learning environment that supports students' social and emotional development.

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<sup>20</sup> Kvale, S. *Doing Interviews*. Sage Publications, 2017.

<sup>21</sup> Bowen, G. A. "Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method." *Qualitative Research Journal*, vol. 9, no. 2, 2019, pp. 27-40.

<sup>22</sup> Braun, V., and V. Clarke. "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology." *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2017, pp. 77-101.

<sup>23</sup> Denzin, N. K. "Triangulation 2.0." *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2016, pp. 80-88.

<sup>24</sup> Orb, A., L. Eisenhauer, and D. Wynaden. "Ethics in Qualitative Research." *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, vol. 33, no. 1, 2018, pp. 93-96.

The SRA program includes training for teachers to create an environment conducive to the psychosocial development of students. For example, the school principal stated that since the implementation of SRA in 2020, all aspects of school life have been directed to support the safety and comfort of students, including providing spaces for them to talk and express their feelings. This aligns with Nugroho's research, which states that the success of SRA depends greatly on creating an environment that supports diversity and student well-being<sup>25</sup>.

Parental involvement is a critical factor in the success of SRA implementation. The school regularly holds meetings with parents to discuss the children's development and the importance of character-building at home. Teachers are also actively educating parents about the importance of creating a child-friendly environment at home. Interviews with parents revealed that they felt valued through this training and became more aware of their role in supporting the emotional development of their children. As stated by Dantes<sup>26</sup>, active parental participation in children's education strengthens the success of implementing inclusive education policies.

The impact of the SRA policy on students has been highly positive, both socially and academically. Students feel safer and more valued, which enhances their motivation to learn and improves interpersonal relationships at school. One student mentioned, "I feel more comfortable learning at this school because my friends always support me, and the teachers care about our feelings." According to Astuti<sup>27</sup>, creating a safe and child-friendly environment can reduce feelings of isolation among students and increase their enthusiasm for learning.

The SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang facilities support implementing the SRA policy, including counselling rooms, comfortable classrooms, and safe play areas. This is based on the policy outlined in Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 82 of 2015, which supports creating a child-friendly school environment. Administrative staff also stated that the counselling room had been provided to assist students needing emotional support, and sports facilities and creativity

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<sup>25</sup> Nugroho, H. *Keberhasilan Sekolah Ramah Anak: Penciptaan Lingkungan yang Mendukung Keberagaman dan Kesejahteraan Siswa*. Jurnal Pendidikan Inklusif, vol. 7, no. 1, 2019, pp. 35-47.

<sup>26</sup> Dantes, S. "Peran Orang Tua dalam Implementasi Kebijakan SRA." *Educational Leadership Review*, vol. 9, no. 1, 2020, pp. 72-80.

<sup>27</sup> Astuti, D. "Dampak Kebijakan Sekolah Ramah Anak Terhadap Perkembangan Siswa." *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2021, pp. 145-152.



rooms also contribute to developing students' character. Adequate facilities are essential to ensure that the SRA policy can be effectively implemented, as explained by Sihombing, who emphasises that adequate educational facilities can support the safety and comfort of students in learning<sup>28</sup>.

Although the implementation of SRA is going well, several challenges have emerged, particularly related to the limited budget for ongoing teacher training and the procurement of additional facilities. Furthermore, some parents are still less involved in supporting this policy, an obstacle to creating an optimal learning environment. The principal mentioned that although SRA has been well implemented, the biggest challenge is providing funding for teacher training and improving school facilities. According to Anwar<sup>29</sup>, budget constraints can be a significant barrier to implementing child-friendly school policies requiring continuous financial support.

The school strives to improve teacher training through a professional development program to address these challenges. The principal has also established partnerships with other institutions to obtain additional resources. As explained by Junaedi, developing teachers' capacity through continuous training can help improve the quality of implementing child-friendly school policies<sup>30</sup>. Another solution is to increase parental involvement by strengthening communication and collaboration through various forums that involve parents, teachers, and the community. Research by Setiawan<sup>31</sup> also shows that active parental participation in the educational process is crucial to supporting the successful implementation of the SRA policy.

Overall, implementing the Child-Friendly School policy at SD Kristen Dorkas has adhered to the principles set forth by the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (KPPPA). The school has successfully created a safe, inclusive environment that supports the psychosocial development of students. These findings support Bronfenbrenner's theory, which emphasises the importance of the

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<sup>28</sup> Sihombing, M. "Peran Fasilitas Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Keamanan dan Kenyamanan Siswa." *Journal of Educational Facilities Management*, vol. 14, no. 1, 2021, pp. 123-130.

<sup>29</sup> Anwar, T. "Tantangan Implementasi Kebijakan SRA di Sekolah Dasar." *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2020, pp. 200-210.

<sup>30</sup> Junaedi, R. "Peningkatan Kualitas Guru Melalui Pelatihan Berkelanjutan." *Journal of Teacher Education*, vol. 13, no. 3, 2021, pp. 302-315.

<sup>31</sup> Setiawan, B. "Keterlibatan Orang Tua dalam Program Sekolah Ramah Anak." *Journal of Parental Involvement in Education*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2021, pp. 59-66.

microsystem in child development. Parental involvement has proven to support the program's success, although there is a need for improvement in parental participation, particularly from families with lower economic backgrounds.

The school has also provided supporting facilities that contribute to the implementation of SRA, such as counselling rooms and sports facilities. However, limitations in resources and funding remain obstacles to optimal implementation. Lestari & Wulandari's<sup>32</sup> research shows that high parental involvement strengthens the effectiveness of the SRA program, but there is still a gap in parental understanding of this policy.

Another challenge is the lack of ongoing training for teachers, which limits their understanding of the SRA concept. This study also found that although the school is committed to the principles of SRA, limitations in facilities and support from local government budgets pose significant barriers to expanding the implementation of this program. Meanwhile, the heavy workload of the school principal also hinders the optimal execution of supervision, as noted by Lear<sup>33</sup>.

The implementation of SRA at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang shows significant progress in creating a child-friendly school. Although there are some challenges, the success in creating an environment that supports students' social, emotional, and academic development is commendable. The synergy between the principal, teachers, parents, and the community is a key factor in ensuring the sustainability and success of the Child-Friendly School policy.

## Conclusion

This study demonstrates that implementing the Child-Friendly School (SRA) policy at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang has been carried out effectively despite various challenges. The school has successfully created a child-friendly, safe, and inclusive environment by applying principles that support child development, such as violence-free learning, restorative discipline approaches, and the reinforcement of

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<sup>32</sup> Lestari, P., and M. Wulandari. "Peran Orang Tua dalam Implementasi SRA." *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Keluarga*, vol. 6, no. 2, 2021, pp. 102-110.

<sup>33</sup> Lear, P. "Peran Kepemimpinan Sekolah dalam Pengawasan Kebijakan SRA." *Journal of School Management*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2018, pp. 88-94.

character values. However, the main challenges encountered include the complex workload of the school principal, limited funding for ongoing training, and the lack of optimal parental participation in supporting this policy. SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang plays a key role in integrating spiritual values with the principles of Child-Friendly School, further strengthening students' character development. Nevertheless, to address the existing challenges, the school needs to improve socialisation and training for teachers and enhance parental and community involvement in supporting this policy.

Additionally, better management of facilities and increased support from the foundation are also crucial for the sustainability of the policy's implementation. The success of the SRA implementation at SD Negeri Sambiroto Rembang heavily depends on the synergy between the school principal, teachers, parents, the foundation, and students and a shared commitment to creating a learning environment based on love, peace, and justice. Therefore, this study significantly contributes to developing SRA policies in religious-based schools and provides practical guidance for other schools wishing to implement similar policies.

Recommendations from this study include the need for intensive and ongoing training for teachers in implementing the *Merdeka Curriculum*, focusing on project-based learning, differentiation, and inclusive approaches by the principles of Child-Friendly School (SRA). Furthermore, optimising school resources and facilities should be done by providing adequate facilities, such as comfortable and safe classrooms, to support creating a child-friendly learning environment. Parental and community involvement is also crucial for strengthening the implementation of the SRA policy through regular communication and active participation in school activities. The monitoring and evaluation system should be strengthened to ensure the success of SRA implementation, involving various stakeholders to identify and address challenges early on. Policy adjustments to meet local needs are also important, considering each school has different contexts and challenges. Finally, wider dissemination and socialisation of the *Merdeka Curriculum* and SRA to all stakeholders will help accelerate understanding and support for this policy. Further research with a broader scope across various schools is also recommended to explore the challenges and solutions for implementing SRA in different contexts.

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