



Bunyip Primary School

Child Safety
Commitment

Statement of Commitment

Bunyip Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Principles of Child Safety:

“In its planning, decision-making and operations Bunyip Primary School will:

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to Children;
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
- Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.”

Child Safety Code of Conduct:

Students

To promote child safety in the school environment we acknowledge the following:

All students have a right to:

- Take part in learning programs that meet their individual needs.
- Feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment.
- Work and play without interference in an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation.
- Receive respect, kindness and courtesy and to be treated with fairness.
- Have learning continue without disruption in a supportive environment.
- Be valued for their individuality including; race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Expect the school rules are fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all involved.

All students have a responsibility to:

- Care and value themselves, others, teachers and the school community.
- Be safety conscious in relation to themselves and others.
- Treat others with respect and good manners.
- Keep the guidelines of good behaviour, modelling and supporting school rules.
- Develop a sense of accountability for their own actions.
- Work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same.
- Allow for others to learn and to respect the rights of others.
- Explore their full potential in their learning.

Child Safety Code of Conduct:

Bunyip Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Bunyip Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Bunyip Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Staff / Contractors / Volunteers

Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy.
- Treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school
- Environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community Activities.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse Backgrounds.
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate protecting children from harm or abuse.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.



Child Safety Code of Conduct:

Staff / Contractors / Volunteers

Unacceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts).
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context.
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting.
- Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
- Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
- In the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse

Forming a belief on reasonable grounds

- A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.

Reporting a belief

- Mandated staff members (*Teachers and Principals*) must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.
- Staff members need to report to the Principal or Assistant Principal their belief when the belief is formed in the course of undertaking their professional duties.
- A report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and on each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.
- If one staff member has a different view from another staff member about making a report and the staff member continues to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, that person is obliged to make a report. (*Please refer to the Bunyip PS Mandatory Reporting and Procedures Policy for procedures in response to allegations of child abuse.*)



Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse

These procedures do not:

- Prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
- State or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
- Require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
- Prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Risk management strategies have been developed within the following school policies:

- *Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures Policy*
- *Student Engagement Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*

References:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>

- If the school identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls).
(*Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.*)
- As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented risk controls.
- The school will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school staff about:
 - ⇒ Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
 - ⇒ Child abuse risks in the school environment; and
 - ⇒ The school's current child safety standards.

Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

- Bunyip Primary School will deliver appropriate education about:
 - ⇒ Standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
 - ⇒ Healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
 - ⇒ Resilience; and
 - ⇒ Child abuse awareness and prevention.
- The school will promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.



Human Resource Practices

Our recruitment, induction, training, supervision and management practices are designed to promote child safety and reduce the risk of child abuse.

- Job applicants are given our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Policy when applying for employment.
- Job applicants are screened and commit to complying with the Child Safety expectations of the school as part of their employment.
- Police Checks are conducted on all staff as per DET requirements for employment and as part of their Working with Children Checks.
- All staff are required to adhere to the V.I.T Teaching Standards and Code of Conduct as part of their employment.
- Job applicants will be reminded during interviews about our Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.
- Staff members are provided with ongoing training and professional learning with regard to their obligations as part of their induction upon commencing at the school.
- All staff will participate in training initiatives that are designed to enhance Child Safety.

Reporting

Clear processes exist for reporting and responding to cases of suspected Child Abuse.

- We have a clear procedure to report suspected child abuse.
- School Child Protection Officers have been appointed.
 - ⇒ Dale Hendrick (Principal) 5629-5462 or speak to in person at school.
 - ⇒ Wendy Whyatt (Business Manager) 5629-5462 or speak to in person at school.
 - ⇒ ***If you believe a child is in imminent danger please call 000 immediately.***
- Reported incidents of suspected child abuse are managed and Mandatory Reporting procedures followed to protect all children at Bunyip Primary School.
- The Principal and School Leadership Team will monitor whole school implementation and compliance of Child Safety procedures and strategies.

Risk Assessment

Current process are implemented and followed to remove or reduce the risk to Child Safety at Bunyip PS.

- Risk assessments are conducted regularly so as to provided a continuous approach to reducing risks of child abuse.
- Processes currently exist to reduce, where possible, virtual and online abuse of children.
- The Principal and School Leadership Team monitor and regularly evaluate the effectiveness of risk controls being implemented.

Empowerment

Students are educated in standards of behaviour, healthy and respectful relationships, resilience and child abuse protection factors.

- Age appropriate educational programs are implemented on acceptable relationships and resilience.
- Students are educated in rule and behaviour expectations as part of the whole school student management processes.
- Children are educated in acceptable use of online and digital resources to ensure their own safety.

