



## **Belle Vue Primary School GOOD LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE IN A CHILD SAFE SCHOOL (Child Safe Standard 1)**

### **CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

A culture of child safety within any organisation is essential for reducing the risk of harm to children.

Belle Vue Primary School will act to protect children from abuse, and build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. We do this by providing a culture of child safety embedded throughout our school so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice.

Belle Vue Primary School will ensure that all allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns are treated very seriously. This includes complying with all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or child protection.

**IF YOU BELIEVE A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF ABUSE PHONE 000**

### **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP**

Leadership at Belle Vue Primary School takes a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of children in our school is of paramount consideration when developing activities, initiatives, policies and management practices.

At Belle Vue Primary School, we foster a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. Belle Vue Primary School is inclusive to all children and families. Children and adults know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

All staff and volunteers must consider the safety of all children, and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

### **CHILD SAFE POLICY**

The school's child safe policy outlines our commitment to promoting children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse. All staff are made aware of the school's Child Safe Policy. Regular reviews of the Child Safety Policy takes place as appropriate and amendments are made in line with regular risk management strategies. The latest version of the policy is available on the school's website.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

Belle Vue Primary School has developed a code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with children. Teachers are regulated by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) under the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) developed the Code of Conduct as required by Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. The Code of Conduct is a set of principles or standards for the behaviour and conduct of all Victorian teachers in the Victorian Government Teaching Service and the non-Government sector.

The following principles are of particular relevance:

*Principle 1.5:* Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school whether at school or not. Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students.

*Principle 1.7:* Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities.

*Principle 2.1:* The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as whole.

While teachers can be friendly with students, parents and communities their relationship must always remain professional and should never be on a personal footing. It is important for teachers to consider the consequences of their actions. This includes the use of digital technology and social media which can seriously damage reputations and propel bullying to new levels. Even with security settings in place, issues may still arise.

As part of its Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, Belle Vue Primary School has developed a specific Student Code of Conduct that encourages appropriate behaviour between children.

## **TRAINING AND SUPERVISION**

Belle Vue Primary School ensures that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. Staff are informed of Mandatory Reporting requirements as part of their initial, and annual, induction to the school and are provided with supporting documentation in their staff handbook. Updates take place annually as part of Staff Performance and Development. Copies of staff Mandatory Reporting certificates are collected and held by the school.

The principal, leadership team and the Welfare Co-ordinator (Child Safety Officer) understand their responsibilities. The Welfare Co-ordinator is the person who has knowledge of child safety issues, and (along with other members of the Leadership Team) may be an appropriate point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of abuse.

## **SCREENING PROCESSES**

Belle Vue Primary School takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. Alongside the Department of Education and Training (DET) recruitment processes, it will ensure it includes:

- Selection criteria in job descriptions
- Police record and identity checks
- Working with Children Checks where required
- Face-to-face interviews
- Detailed reference checks from previous employers

## **EFFECTIVELY RESPONDING TO SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE**

The process for reporting concerns about child safety (including confidentiality) are set out in the school's Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures.

## **IDENTIFYING AND REDUCING RISK OF ABUSE**

Belle Vue Primary School adopts an approach to prevent, detect and respond to child abuse risks. This includes a risk management strategy and policy that sets out how the school identifies, assesses, and takes steps to reduce or remove child abuse risks. Risk management strategies are informed by the tools provided by the education department. Any risk management strategy is inclusive to all children and families including Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## **EMPOWER AND PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION OF CHILDREN IN DECISION MAKING**

Belle Vue Primary School promotes the involvement and participation of children in developing and maintaining child safe environments. Belle Vue Primary School provides opportunities for children to express their views on the Student Code of Conduct, and then incorporates this feedback to improve our policies and practices. Ideas from children are sought through Junior School Council meetings; suggestion boxes and feedback sessions.

Belle Vue Primary School endeavours to listen to children and take their ideas or concerns seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other children.

Belle Vue Primary School is inclusive to all children and families. In particular, it seeks to establish a culture that supports:

- cultural safety for Aboriginal children, for example by working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations
- cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, for example by using inclusive language and images in policy documents, and communications such as the website and newsletters

- the safety of children with a disability, for example by ensuring that Belle Vue Primary School is accessible to everyone and ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with a disability.

**RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL**

**DATE: 15 May 2019**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version Number:</b>	<b>Update information</b>	<b>Next Review:</b>
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