

CHILD SAFETY: CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2

PURPOSE

Beaumaris North Primary School's Child Safety Policy sets out the school's commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors in the school environment, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. This policy also applies to school council members where indicated.

The policy will apply to the school environment (see Definitions section). The policy covers both school hours and outside of school hours.

DEFINITIONS

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence; or
 - grooming; and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - physical violence; or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school, school council, or Secretary of the Department of Education and Training and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school;
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, homestays, and other school activities or events).

School staff

School staff means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- employed by the Department of Education and Training;
- directly engaged or employed by a school council; or
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY AND CHILD SAFETY PRINCIPLES

Beaumaris North Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

‘To inspire students to be lifelong learners and take risks with their learning, pursue their interests and flourish under our guidance’.

Our Vision

Our vision is to develop, in partnership with the whole community, an effective, caring and dynamic learning community.

The learning community is founded on an educational philosophy centred on the child, and grounded in the belief that all students can learn and all students have the right to become effective learners. It is important to continue to strengthen the partnership between staff, the students and their parents if this vision is to be achieved. Through our school Strategic Plan, which is underpinned by our Annual Implementation Plan, we will endeavour to develop the teaching practices and learning that supports this philosophy.

We will use a model of professional learning that promotes and develops these effective practices and has at its core, the essential elements for learning; constructivism, inquiry, collaboration, self-responsibility and personal development in an environment of challenge and support. These core practices enable us to build a community of global learners. The professional learning of teachers will be both focused and tied to our agreed direction of improving learning and teaching, and as a result, improving student outcomes.

We value opportunities for student voice, choice and ownership of their own learning. We strive to inspire students to be lifelong learners and take risks with their learning, pursue their interests and flourish under our guidance.

At Beaumaris North Primary School our values guide the decisions and behaviours of all members of our school community, including in relation to child safety –

We will CARE for others, showing EMPATHY, compassion and RESPECT towards the needs and feelings of others. We will show RESPONSIBILITY to our own learning and belongings, displaying self-discipline and commitment. We will show TRUST acting with integrity, honesty and a strong sense of fairness.

Beaumaris North Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

We are 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. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.

Every person involved in Beaumaris North Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Child safety principles

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Beaumaris North Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children;
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. 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 concerns;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

POLICY

Strategies to embed a child safe culture

Beaumaris North Primary School's culture encourages staff, students, parents and the school community to raise, discuss and scrutinise child safety concerns. This makes it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

All child safety documents, including this policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#) and the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) are readily available on our school website for all staff and students to read at any time.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. **All school staff** are required to:

- Act in accordance with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Act in accordance with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures at all times, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) where necessary
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- Act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:
 - Failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)
 - Duty of care (applies to all school staff)
 - Mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, principals, registered psychologists, and registered doctors and nurses)
 - Failure to protect offence (applies to a person in a position of authority within the school)
 - Reportable conduct obligations (applies to all school staff in reporting conduct to the principal, and applies to the principal in reporting to Employee Conduct Branch)
 - Organisational duty of care (applies to the school as an organisation)
 - For more information on these obligations, see [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#).

As part of Beaumaris North Primary School's child safe culture, **school leadership** (including the principal and assistant principal) will:

- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when implementing the Child Safe Standards

- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings and staff meetings
- Encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse
- Ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school or from making records of any allegation

As part of Beaumaris North Primary School's child safe culture, every staff member including teaching staff, all ES staff, the regular CRTs and Instrumental Music teachers are required to:

- Complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year. We require this to be done during the first few weeks of the school year and all participants must lodge their certificate to the office for collation.
- Read the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document.
- Read the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document.
- Read the school's Child Safety Policy (this document) on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document.

As part of Beaumaris North Primary School's child safe culture, in performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, **school councils and school council members** will:

- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings.
- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards.
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety, such as the [Child Safe Standards School Council Training PowerPoint](#).
- Approve the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members, and if updated, note the new document in its school council meeting minutes.
- When hiring employees, ensure that selection, supervision and management practices are child safe (unless delegated to the principal).

School leadership will maintain records of the above processes.

Roles and responsibilities

School leaders will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which sets out clearly the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

The assistant principal and the school wellbeing officer are nominated as the BNPS "School Child Safety Officers" whose role includes the following:

- To act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- To liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- To lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- The assistant principal and the wellbeing team are responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety Policy every 3 years.
- "School Child Safety Officers" are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety Policy. The school community should approach these staff members if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety Policy.

- The assistant principal is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available.
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in Beaumaris North Primary School's other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and risk assessment register.

Recruitment

Beaumaris North Primary School follows the Department's Recruitment in Schools guide to ensure child safe recruitment practices, available on the [Department's website](#).

All prospective volunteers are required to comply with our school's Volunteers Policy, which requires all volunteers to present a valid Working with Children Check which will be placed on our school volunteer register which is maintained by the administration staff.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in the school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our school culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children.

New employees and volunteers will be inducted into the school, including by being referred to the Child Safety Policy (this document), the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures on the school website .

They will also be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our school's commitment to child safety, and that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. All employees of our school will be monitored and assessed via regular performance review to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported by school staff to the Principal or Assistant Principal and will be managed in accordance with Beaumaris North Primary School's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures where required.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The school has clear expectations for all staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. All staff (including school council employees) must follow the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) if there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. Immediate actions should include reporting their concerns to DHHS Child Protection, Victoria Police and/or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

Beaumaris North Primary School will never prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse. The school will always take action to respond to a complaint in accordance with the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures. In accordance with Action 4 of the Four Critical Actions for Schools, Beaumaris North Primary School will provide ongoing support for students affected by child abuse.

The Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures can be found on the school website.

Risk reduction and management

Beaumaris North Primary School believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes, found in the school's risk assessment register.

The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

We will identify and mitigate the risks of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

Beaumaris North Primary School monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the actions it takes to reduce or remove risks to child safety, more information can be found in the school's risk assessment register.

Listening to, communicating with and empowering children

Beaumaris North Primary School has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. Our school is committed to supporting and encouraging students to use their voice to raise and share their concerns with a trusted adult at any time of need. Students can access information on how to report abuse via the Protect link on our school website at:

<https://beaumarisnorthps.vic.edu.au/>

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with or abuse of a child, the school will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (and/or their parents/carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

The school will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, including:

- All of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for the students and parents at Beaumaris North Primary School to read on our school website at:
<https://beaumarisnorthps.vic.edu.au/>
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school.
- School newsletters will inform students and the school community about the school's commitment to child safety, and strategies or initiatives that the school is taking to ensure student safety.
- Child safety is a weekly item on Year Level Planning Meetings. Any items raised under this topic are discussed with our school wellbeing officer, our school child safety officers and/or our PCO's. If issues are raised under this item they are actioned immediately, the same day.
- All staff are aware of, have open access to and regularly utilise our school child safety officers.
- All staff are aware of, and have access to, our school child safety officers if they would like to discuss a potential concern and that child safety officer will support the staff member if they form a belief that organisations outside of the school should be informed of their concerns.
- If for some reason the school child safety officer is not available then any member of our distributed leadership team will be able to help that member of staff.
- Our BeYou Team meet regularly (from Term 3 2020) and Child Safety is a regular item on their agenda.
- All staff complete Child Protection training in February of each year.
- We organise regular PD's on child safety throughout the school year.
- If an issue is raised that is relevant to the whole school, we will organise extraordinary meetings to address.
- We have a daily briefing with all staff each morning and child safe policy, issues and concerns are discussed verbally at this meeting as appropriate.
- Staff who work with our students with additional needs or vulnerable children are offered extra support as necessary. Specific child safe PD's for this group are sought.
- Share the update to this standard with the BeYou Team for initial input (this team includes parent representation) then with the rest of the school staff.

Student focused actions

- PROTECT poster displayed in all classrooms and all communal areas. This is discussed with children at the beginning of each term and they are reminded that it is there.
- All children from 3-6 given information on calling Kids Helpline and the details of how to call hung in classrooms. Again, this is discussed at the beginning of each term.
- At the beginning of each school year there is a wellbeing day for the children. Child Safe is mentioned and an integrated part of that day.
- All children are regularly reminded that if they have any worries or concerns there are number of people in the school they can discuss these concerns with. It could be their classroom teacher, another teaching member of their year level, any other teacher or PCO in the school. They are also reminded about the external sources of support available.
- Participation in Cybersafety Day, Harmony 'day, BeYou Day and National Day of action against bullying all designed to empower students to be proactive and protective of their personal safety.
- Provide age appropriate Wellbeing programs such as Rock & Water/Girls on the Go for Year 6.
- Regular meditation opportunities e.g. use of Smiling Minds app.
- An effective eSmart policy and procedures with a comprehensive set of Guidelines.
- Provide supervision of students (from 8:45am – 3:45pm) – A Yard Duty Roster is implemented each school day for the yard, or hot/wet days.
- We provide ample opportunities for student voice across the school through – Circle Time, Leadership positions, JSC meetings, student led assemblies, student led conferences, student feedback sessions, Learning Task feedback, strategies for confidential feedback in individual classrooms.

The school will use its health and wellbeing programs to deliver appropriate education to its students about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
- resilience; and
- child abuse awareness and prevention.
- The Resilience Program is our whole school wellbeing program, incorporating staff, student and parental involvement
- Rock and Water Program for Year 6 students
- We annually review our wellbeing incursions and programs following the results of The Resilience Survey with grades 3-6 and add specific programs to our planners based on issues that affect specific grades and genders of students e.g. in 2020 we have booked in a MAT program (Martial Arts Therapy Program) for boys in grade 5 following results showing they were feeling slightly disengaged; we booked in a 'improve sleep hygiene' program based on our results that grade 4 students were not sleeping well and we just booked in a 'transition to high school program aimed at helping our Grade 6 students transition during Covid. We will continue to analyse our Resilience Survey data and plan accordingly in future years.

Communications

This school is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety Policy (this document), Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure are available on the school website.
- Once per term reminders in the school newsletter of our school's commitment to child safety.
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings and staff meetings for discussion.
- Child safe policy clearly displayed on website.
- Relevant Child Safe information is communicated to parents via Compass (our internal communication system) as appropriate.

- Our Child Safe policy is discussed with all new parents to our school and during any initial meetings with parents.
- Intermittently, we may organise PD opportunities for parents as appropriate.
- Support or assistance to children and families who disclose on a case by case issue
- Provide Parent Information evenings related to student safety and wellbeing e.g. Resilience Project
- Provide parents with access to information on issues relating to their children or families from outside agencies e.g. Michael Carr-Gregg, BeYou, Andrew Fuller.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY

This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the Department of Education and Training's [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Related policies and documents include:

- Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures
- Risk assessment register
- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Duty of Care](#)
- [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Child Protection Reporting Obligations.](#)

POLICY EVALUATION AND REVIEW

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

APPROVAL

School Principal: Sherril Duffy

Date of last review: September 2020