



BALLARAT CENTRE OF MUSIC AND THE ARTS – CHILD SAFETY POLICY

1. BALLARAT CENTRE OF MUSIC AND THE ARTS – CHILD SAFETY POLICY

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, employees, contractors and volunteers to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices we have developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

1.1. Commitment to Child Safety

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to Ballarat Centre of Music and the Arts (BCMA) have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse, whether physical, verbal or emotional. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun.

This policy was developed in collaboration with all our staff, volunteers and the children who use our services and their parents. It applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our organisation.

1.2. Children's rights to safety and participation

BCMA employees, contractors and volunteers encourage children to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all children who use our services to 'have a say' about directions, plans and happenings that are important to them.

We endeavour to communicate to students about what they can do if they feel unsafe through use of printed materials displayed in the waiting area and through a briefing in each class at the start of each semester. We listen to and act on any concern's children, or their parents/carers, raise with us.

1.3. Valuing Diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of indigenous children and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- welcome children with disabilities and their families, and act to promote their participation
- seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

1.4. Recruiting staff and volunteers

BCMA applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of employees, contractors and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require Working with Children Checks for all positions within the organisation. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in communications.

1.5. Supporting staff and volunteers

BCMA seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers.

1.6. Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Paula Heenan and Emma Sbardella have been appointed as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. Our complaints processes are outlined in the below diagram.



1.7. Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

1.8. Reviewing this policy

This policy will be reviewed regularly and we undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.