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## **BERG Mt Martha Schools Program Policy April 2021**

As a volunteer organisation BERG Mt Martha has limited resources. To make best use of these resources, respect the generosity and commitment of our volunteers and provide the best educational outcomes for students, BERG Mt Martha will offer programs in partnership with schools based on the following principles:

The purpose of the BERG Mt Martha “Schools Program” policy is to reduce the risk of child abuse occurring and all individuals to whom this policy applies should avoid direct **unsupervised** contact with children .

1. Any program/activity must be part of a defined education program within the school curriculum.
2. Each activity must have the active involvement of students and enable them to gain skills, knowledge and understandings that they can apply in the future.
3. Teachers must supervise students at all times and take a lead role in each activity. Teachers must also remain present for the duration of the program.
4. All BERG MM volunteers involved in each activity are required to have a current working with children check in accordance with Victorian Government legislation.
5. Teachers need to achieve understandings and skills that enable them to provide follow-up to activities with BERG Mt Martha, and that they can apply to future classroom projects.
6. Activities will involve a maximum of two classes, 50 children, at any one time.
7. Programs will run for a maximum of 2 hours per session. Activities during the session might include: weeding and planting, Dragonfly Trail listening posts and activities, a bird hide walk and talk, learning about the estuary and its importance, or other by negotiation and depending on the availability of BERG Mt Martha volunteers and expertise.
8. Parents are informed that BERG Mt Martha is involved in the planned activity/program with their children and are provided with BERG Mt Martha contact information.
9. The school will provide to BERG Mt Martha, at least a week before the planned session/s, any special requirements in relation to the children to be involved and/or activities to be undertaken.
10. Publicity for the activity/program is provided to the school community.
11. Payment is made for any expenses incurred by BERG Mt Martha (e.g. plants, tipping fees for weeds, additional equipment or resources required).
12. Where possible, the school makes a donation to support the work of BERG Mt Martha in restoring and preserving the ecology and integrity of the Balcombe Estuary Reserves and Coastal Reserve.