

## VIT Video

### MEET THE VIT COUNCIL: PETER CLIFTON

*Damian:*

*So Peter tell us about your background in teaching.*

**Peter:**

**Damian my background perhaps started when I was five year old and I believe I wanted to become a teacher. I trained in Ballarat in the late 70s and then began my teaching career at Melton as a physical education teacher. I became a consultant before returning to the classroom as a Leading Teacher with the focus on curriculum.**

**I've since then moved on to become a primary school principal and for the last 19 years I've been very proud of the work that I do at Magpie Primary School.**

*Damian:*

*Okay, so Magpie Primary School - tell us a little bit about that.*

**Peter:**

**Magpie's a small rural school of about 90 children on the southern edge of Ballarat in Western Victoria.**

*Damian:*

*Sorry, how many pupils do you have?*

**Peter:**

**We have 90 children. We run five classes and we offer a broad range of extra curriculum activities. It's a low socio-economic school but we have a wonderful bunch of teachers and support staff who contribute to the learning of the children in their community.**

*Damian:*

*Fantastic, and what would you say are the pros of working in a small environment like that? What makes it great?*

**Peter:**

**I think it's the personality that we get to know – the personality of the children and the personality of the families, and the teachers make such a powerful impact on the children and we see that very quickly. When small schools take on new ideas they come to fruition very, very quickly and we can see the benefit. An individualised learning approach in our school has come about with a focus on independent learning in the last few years and we're making great inroads in the success of children's learning at all levels of the school.**

*Damian:*

*Fantastic! Okay so now let's focus on your career as a member of the VIT Council: what was your reason for you know joining the Council?*

**Peter:**

**My primary motivation I think was related to small schools. I'm the principal of a small school, I have a wonderful team of teachers and I suppose my role on Council allows me to demonstrate that small schools can contribute at a very high level at a state level. So I come to the VIT council and I sit on the VIT subcommittees as the principal of a small school, safe in the knowledge that the children's learning is being held over by lots of**

**teachers who are doing a great job. That allows me to bring the expertise and knowledge of small schools experience to the VIT table and I think that's an important voice to be heard around the state because many of our government schools are small schools: over 350 to 500 I think are considered small schools and I hope to demonstrate that the voice of a small school is a proud voice, it's an experienced voice and it's a valued voice at the VIT table.**

*Damian:*

*So you've been a member of the VIT Council for three years. Tell us about what you think are the benefits of being on the VIT Council, the benefit of having a Council.*

**Peter:**

**I've been a member for three years, this is my third year and I'm hoping to continue. And the benefits I think are the opportunity to contribute to the profession at a leading level. This is a statewide organization and I bring experiences I have to the VIT to the Council and to the subcommittee process and I see that that experience assists the VIT in bringing about the best outcomes with students of our schools to get to take the best teachers available in our state.**