



Volunteers Policy

1. Purpose

To outline the processes that our school will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

2. Scope

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

3. Definitions

3.1 *Child-related work*: work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional contact with children that is incidental to the work.

3.2 *Closely related family member*: parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, step-parent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

3.3 *Volunteer worker*: A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

3.4 *School work*: School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a school council
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

4. Policy

4.1 Our school is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Our school also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do.

4.2 The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that our school's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

4.3 Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to contact the school and speak to the Principal.



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Once the Principal gives their approval for the volunteer to commence at the school, the volunteer must meet with the Human Resources Manager to provide their contact and emergency details, as well as a copy of their Working with Children Check and any other documentation as required. The HR Manager will provide an induction appropriate to the volunteer's role.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act 2020* and the *Child Safe Standards*, our school is required to undertake suitability checks. Volunteers will be required to obtain a Working With Children Check and produce their valid card to the Human Resources Manager for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is not participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

Non child-related work

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example, volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, fundraising groups etc, during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

Volunteers for this type of work are not required to have WWC Check or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, our school reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and/or WWC Check, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

4.4 Management and supervision

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety Policy, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the Department's policies relating to Equal



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Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, Occupational Health and Safety, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying.

The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at our school.

Our school will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in.

The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

4.5 Compensation

Personal injury

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education's Workers' Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

Property damage

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.

Public liability insurance

The Department of Education's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:

- a claim for bodily injury to a third party
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

5. Related Policies and Resources

5.1 Victoria University Secondary College policies:

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy
- Staff Professional Dress Code Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Working With Children Check and Policy Records Check Policy

5.2 Department policies:

- Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination
- Child Safe Standards
- Sexual Harassment
- Volunteers in Schools
- Volunteer OHS Management
- Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors
- Workplace Bullying



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6. Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available to staff on Sharepoint and discussed with staff as required
- Provided to volunteers prior to commencement.
- Available to members of the school community on request.

7. Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by changes to Department of Education guidelines.