

VOLUNTEERS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the processes that Richmond West Primary School will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

SCOPE

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

DEFINITIONS

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.

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

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

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.

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POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to approach a classroom teacher, or enquire at the front office.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Under the directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, volunteers attending school to work are required to be vaccinated or provide evidence that they are medically exempted. Our school is required to collect, record and hold vaccination information from relevant visitors and volunteers to ensure they meet these requirements.

For Department policy on COVID-19 mandatory vaccinations for visitors, including advice on the type of information that schools are required to collect, record and hold, refer to:

[COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers Working on School Sites](#)

As a volunteer at Richmond West Primary School you are also under obligation to comply with the following:

Working with students

Richmond West Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/other events and programs.

To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working Screening Act 2020* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, **Richmond West Primary School** is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working with Children Clearance, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Richmond West Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to front office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school are required to have a WWC Clearance 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

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In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability Clearances 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, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings 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 Working with Children Clearance or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Richmond West Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity and Working with Children Clearances, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

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 Child Safety Policy / Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and our Child Safety Code of Conduct. 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 Richmond West Primary School.

Richmond West Primary 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.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Richmond West Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

Compensation

Personal injury

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education and Training'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

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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 and Training'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.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Reminders in the school newsletter and through COMPASS posts
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for visitors and volunteers
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

RELATED POLICIES

This policy should be read and understood (but not limited to) in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- First Aid Policy
- CSS Statement of Commitment and Code of Conduct
- Visitors Policy

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Clearances for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

Related Legislation:

- [Worker Screening Act 2020](#)
- [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014](#)

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POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle, OR if DET regulations change.

Policy last reviewed	February 2022
Approved by	Principal
Consultation	N/A
Next scheduled review date	February 2026