

## Volunteers Policy

### Background

At Huntingdale Primary School, parents and community members participate in a wide variety of school activities. This includes classroom activities, sports, camps, excursions, in school visits, music lessons, therapy sessions and so on.

This policy outlines the processes that Huntingdale 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.

### Purpose

To:

- Ensure Huntingdale Primary School has appropriate processes in the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.
- Ensure all volunteers and visitors have a valid WWC Check when working a Huntingdale Primary School.
- Ensure the safety of all children.
- Be compliant with the Child Safe Standards particularly Standard 4- Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.
- Are compliant with the Working With Children Act 2005 and relevant DET policies.
- Implement DET's Values of Accountability, Human Rights, Impartiality, Integrity, Leadership, Respect and Responsiveness.

### 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 (i.e. indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

### **Implementation**

- The Principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy, but may delegate certain roles to suitably qualified staff.
- This policy works in conjunction with the following policies:
  - Child Safe Standards
  - Excursions, Camps and In School Visits
  - Visitors
  - Mandatory Reporting
- Huntingdale Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices, which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Huntingdale's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

### **Becoming a volunteer**

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to contact their child's teacher (if they are a parent, caregiver or family member).

Volunteers outside the school must contact the school office who will then pass on their enquiry to the Principal.

### **Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks**

#### **Working with students**

Huntingdale values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms and with sports events, camps, excursions, concerts and other events. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Huntingdale Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working With Children Check, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Huntingdale Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require all volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the 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 Check 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.
  - **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not (not applicable at Huntingdale Primary School)
  - Parents/community members who volunteer at school working bees and fetes will be required to have a WWC as children are routinely present at this event.
- If a person has a kinship arrangement, the rules are different and they need a WWC check regardless. The school would know who these parents are on enrolment and would discuss this with them.
  - Once parents and volunteers have a valid WWC check, they will be required to bring their WWC check with them each time they participate in an excursion or activity in the classroom. If their WWC Check is not validated or they don't bring it with them, they will not be allowed to participate.
  - Regular volunteers' details will be added to the online system. Parents will be given a 'quick pin' access so they do not have to enter their WWC check number each time.
  - Events where parents are watching their own children such as concerts and sports do not need a WWC check.
  - There are some exemptions for WWC Check- this includes police officers, teachers, children, some teenage volunteers and interstate/international visitors. Please see [http://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/wwcc/resources/5ab5928e-9b9e-43fe-b18b-6e351e65a71d/exemptions\\_guide\\_may2017.pdf](http://assets.justice.vic.gov.au/wwcc/resources/5ab5928e-9b9e-43fe-b18b-6e351e65a71d/exemptions_guide_may2017.pdf)
  - For more information about parent participation in schools please see: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/involve/Pages/parent.aspx>
  - For information about the WWC check process please see <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

### **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, Watashi Mo Meetings, School Council, participating in sub-committees of School Council and 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 or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Huntingdale Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Checks, 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 policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safe Standards Policy and Code of Conduct. Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education and Training policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the Department’s policies relating to Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, 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 Huntingdale Primary School.

Huntingdale 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 Huntingdale Primary School’s child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Mandatory Reporting 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 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.

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s 3 year cycle or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

## Document Status

Reviewed	School Council Ratification	Next Review
22 October 2019- Education & Future Directions sub-committee	12 November 2019	October 2021

