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## 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.



### Help for non-English speakers

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

### 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 the safety of all children.
- Be compliant with the Child Safe Standards and relevant DET policies.
- Implement DET's Values of Accountability, Human Rights, Impartiality, Integrity, Leadership, Respect and Responsiveness.

### Definitions

*Child-connected work:* work authorised by the school governing authority/provider of a school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

*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 schoolwork 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 school policies:
  - Child Safe Standards
  - Excursions, Camps and In School Visits
  - Visitors
  - Mandatory Reporting

and Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
  - [Child Safe Standards](#)
  - [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
  - [Records Management – School Records](#)
  - [Sexual Harassment](#)
  - [Volunteers in Schools](#)
  - [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
  - [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
  - [Workplace Bullying](#)
- 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

### COVID-19 vaccination information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations. For further information, refer to [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

### Working with students

Huntingdale Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms and with sports events, camps, excursions, school concerts and other events. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Huntingdale Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance. Additional suitability checks may also be required depending on the volunteer role, such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children 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)

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.

- 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.
- Events where parents are watching their own children such as concerts and sports do not need a WWC check.
- 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.

### **Training and induction**

- Under the Child Safe Standards volunteers must have an appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.
- To support us to maintain a child safe environment, before engaging in any work where children are present or reasonable likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Child Safety Induction Pack and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school.
- Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Huntingdale Primary School may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

### **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 and Wellbeing 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 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 (or their nominee) will determine the level of school staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.
- 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.

### **Privacy and information-sharing**

- Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of because of their volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) and the Department's policy on [Privacy and Information Sharing](#).
- Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:
  - support the student's education, wellbeing and health.
  - reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors.
  - make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
  - provide a safe and secure workplace.



- Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the school such as to Victoria Police. For further information on child safety responding and reporting obligations refer to: *Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures*.

### **Records management**

- While it is unlikely volunteers will be responsible for any school records during their volunteer work, any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to Principal, Assistant Principal or Business Manager to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

### **Sign in procedure**

All volunteers are required to report to the school office and on arrival must:

- Record their name, signature, date and time of visit and purpose of visit using our online system
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check where required by this policy
- Wear a visitor's tag at all times
- Return to the office upon departure and sign out
- 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.

### **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 schoolwork.

#### *Property damage*

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out schoolwork, 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 schoolwork 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:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for staff
- Included in online in our staff key documents folder
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request



### Evaluation

The principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

### Document Status

<b>Created date</b>	19 June 2022- updated policy
<b>Consultation</b>	School Community via Operoo- 21 June 2022 Staff- email 21 June 2022 Old policy- 22 October 2019- Education & Future Directions sub-committee
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Ruth Biddle, Principal
<b>Endorsed on</b>	1 July 2022
<b>Next review date</b>	1 July 2024