

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

2022-2024

Child Safe Standards

Children have the right to be safe and protected, including at school.

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe>

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Kennington 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 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 (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

POLICY

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

A student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported. Staff, students, volunteers, and the school community are equipped to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students. Measures are in place to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated, and any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences. Active support for the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and students and their families.

Staff and volunteers will be supported to understand the diverse circumstance of children and students, and provide support and respond to vulnerable children and students. Students, staff, volunteers, and the school community have access to information, support and complaints processes that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand. Particular attention will be paid to the needs of students with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students who are unable to live at home, international students, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students

Kennington Primary School will implement engagement practices for volunteers engaged in child connected work, including:

- sight, verify and record Working with Children clearances where required under the Worker Screening Act 2020 or any equivalent background check
- consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer's role and, if reasonable and appropriate, collect and record proof of identify, essential or relevant qualifications, history of work involving children and references addressing suitability for the job and working with children
- make volunteers aware of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct
- ensure all newly appointed school staff, school council members, and volunteers engaged in child-connected work receive an induction regarding child safety and wellbeing appropriate to their roles, including information about the Child Safety Code of Conduct the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the procedures for managing child abuse complaints and concerns.
- ensure school staff, school council members and volunteers engaged in child-connected work are aware of their responsibilities to children and students, information sharing, reporting obligations and record-keeping obligations.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Kennington Primary School'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 make contact with the school office and outline how they would like to volunteer and when they are available.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

Kennington Primary School values the many volunteers that assist e.g. 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 With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Kennington Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which will include a Working With Children Check and may include proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Kennington Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the office staff for verification to assist with **all school related** activities.

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 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 Kennington Primary School.

Kennington 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 Kennington 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 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.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Statement of Values

Visitors Policy

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety/Child Safe Policy

Child Safety Code of Conduct

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last ratified by School Council in June 2022 and will be reviewed in June 2024.
