

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

RATIONALE:

At Amsleigh Park Primary School we greatly value the participation and contribution of the many volunteers who support our school. We acknowledge that the participation of volunteers is vital to our success and the provision of many learning opportunities. In keeping with current expectations we are committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children, our staff and volunteers. We also ensure that we meet the obligations of Ministerial order 870 related to the Child safe Standards.

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.

GOAL:

- ❖ To outline the processes that Amsleigh Park 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.

GUIDELINES:

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

Amsleigh Park 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 Amsleigh Park 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 be involved in the range of learning programs or school events that require adult support such as excursions, incursions, camps, swimming, special event days, school disco, Mother's day, Father's day stall and community nights. Generally, there will be a call for volunteers unless we are seeking specific skills or experiences for activities such as school camps.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

- ❖ Amsleigh Park Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in the many school activities. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Amsleigh Park 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 Amsleigh Park Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to our school office annually 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
- ❖ 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.
- ❖ To be a volunteer at Amsleigh Park Primary School a valid Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:
 - Valid for 5 years
 - Transferable between volunteer organisations
 - Free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

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, 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, Amsleigh Park 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.

Maintaining Records

- ❖ Amsleigh Park Primary School will implement procedures to ensure staff members and volunteers hold a valid WWC Check card; at a minimum annually at the commencement of the school year. A register will be maintained of our staff and/or parents by the school in accordance with requirements of the VRQA.
- ❖ It is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to:

- Provide Amsleigh Park Primary School with the successful WWC Check card prior to commencement
- Notify the principal if there has been a relevant change in circumstances, for example, if they have been charged or found guilty of a new relevant offence or if their WWC Check has been suspended.
- Apply for a new WWC Check before their card expires.
- ❖ Amsleigh Park Primary School will apply privacy principles when collecting, using, retaining or disposing of personal or health information in accordance with the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014* (Vic) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (Vic).
- ❖ The Working with Children Act identifies categories of individuals who are exempted from the requirement to have a WWC Check. Amsleigh Park Primary School reserves the right to nevertheless require a WWC Check if the principal considers it necessary in the circumstances. The exempt categories are:
 - ❖ Student volunteers - A student who is 18 or 19 years of age is exempt from the WWC Check for volunteer work organised by or held at the same educational institution they attend.
 - ❖ Brother or sister - including half siblings, step siblings, brother-in-law or sister-in-law.
 - ❖ Teachers - Registered teachers or teachers who have permission to teach from the Victorian Institute of Teaching under Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.
 - ❖ Police officers - Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check.
 - ❖ Non-Exempt activities – The following activities require parents to have a Working with Children Check regardless of their child being a participant.
 - Swimming
 - Camps
 - Disco Supervision

For a full list of exemptions and examples refer to: [Working with Children Check – Exemptions](#)

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 Environments Policy, our Child Safe Environments 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 Amsleigh Park Primary School.
- ❖ Amsleigh Park 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 Amsleigh Park 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

- ❖ This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:
 - Child Safe Environments Policy
 - Child Safe Environments Code of Conduct
 - School Statement of Philosophy and Values

ACHIEVEMENT MEASURES

- ❖ This policy will be reviewed at least annually or more often if necessary due to changes in legislation or circumstances

STATUS:

Reviewed: March 2019

Ratified: April 2019

Next Review: March 2020

This policy will be review annually, unless there are any legislative changes.