



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Eastwood 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.

POLICY

Eastwood Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Eastwood Primary School values the support volunteers provide in areas such as;

- Classroom helpers (Literacy, Maths, Investigation Time, Art, general classroom help)
- Making classroom resources
- Excursions/swimming



- Sporting activities
- Whole school events/fundraisers
- Working in the 'Snack Bar'
- School Council
- School Council Sub Committees
- Kids hope mentors
- Eastwood Parents and Friends (EP&F)

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Eastwood 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 speak to their child's classroom teacher or contact the school office.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

When deciding if a Working with Children Check is required, the school will refer to *the Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools*.

Working with students

Eastwood 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 With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Eastwood 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 Eastwood Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the school 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. This is a legal requirement under the *Working with Children Check Act*.
- **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. This is a legal requirement under the *Working with Children Check Act*.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

*[Note that volunteers who are parents, or closely related family members of a child at the school who volunteer as part of an activity that their child is participating in or usually participate in are **not** required to have a WWC Check under the WWC Act. However, DET recommends that schools do require parents to obtain one in these circumstances given the degree of contact volunteers may have with students in these situations – see [Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools](#) on the [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#) page. Schools can choose to add further activities to this list where there is a higher degree of risk posed.]*

Parent/family members who volunteer as part of an activity that their child is participating in or usually participates in are not required to have a WWC Check under the WWC Act.



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.

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 Eastwood Primary School this may include 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 or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Eastwood 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 Policy our Child Safe 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 Eastwood Primary School.

Eastwood 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 Eastwood Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures.

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

Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools

Statement of Values and School Philosophy

Visitors Policy

Child Safe Policy

Child Safe Code of Conduct

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last approved by School Council November 2018 and is scheduled for review in 2021.

Suitability Check Flowchart for Schools

Is the visitor/volunteer likely to have any contact with children while performing their work duties?

YES

NO

What is the nature of the work/engagement?

Suitable identification and screening checks, if any, relevant to the role should be undertaken and risks identified.**

Child-related work
 Work that usually involves direct contact (including phone, written and online communication) with a child as part of work duties.
 (e.g. attendant care, school camps, excursions (including swimming), literacy and numeracy/classroom support, sporting/musical and other extra-curricular assistants and coaches, breakfast/lunch clubs and other student support activities, canteen assistant, Allied health/NDIS therapists, Departmental Staff who are working with children, SRI, Distance education)

Child connected work
 Work duties that only involve occasional direct or indirect contact with children that is incidental to the work.
 (e.g. fete/fundraising activities, tradespeople, working bee, parents and friends clubs.)

A Working with Children Check is legally required.
 Suitable identification checks relevant to the role should also be undertaken and risk identified**

The Person is exempt from a Working with Children Check due to higher level of screening for their profession.*
 (e.g. teachers, police officers)
 Suitable identification and screening checks relevant to the role should also be undertaken and risks identified**

Requiring a Working with Children Check is at the discretion of the school principal.
 Other suitability and identification checks, if any, relevant to the role should be undertaken and risks identified**

NOTE: A Working with Children check is recommended where the visitor/volunteer will regularly be present at the school and/or children can reasonably be expected to be present.

NOTE: Parents are legally exempt from the requirement to hold a WWC check when volunteering in an activity in which their child normally participates. In these cases requiring a WWC Check is at the discretion of the school – but it is recommended in most circumstances where the parent is regularly involved in the volunteer activity and working directly with children and/or the nature of the activity poses a higher risk, e.g. overnight camps, swimming, or activities involving close contact, etc.

*For further information on who is exempt from requiring a WWC see: [Working with Children Check - Exemptions](#)
 ** For further information on appropriate suitability and identification checks see: [SPAG Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)