



# VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Sandringham Primary School community is embedded in resilience, resourcefulness, a commitment to building positive relationships, self-responsibility and respect for self, others and the environment.

## Purpose

To outline the processes that Sandringham 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-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:* As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic), child-related work is 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 direct 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.

## Implementation/ Process

Sandringham Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices, which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Sandringham Primary School seeks to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and encourages volunteers to the school. We recognise our duty of care to provide a safe environment for the students, staff and parents of Sandringham Primary School.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Sandringham Primary School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

## Volunteering at Sandringham Primary School

Volunteers, such as parents and community members, are actively encouraged to participate in school activities and will be invited to do so through the School Newsletter and website, notices, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.

Volunteers are required to sign in at the School Office upon arrival. Similarly, they are required to report to the School Office at the end of their visit to sign out.

### ***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. Examples at Sandringham Primary School may include working bees, attendance at parents association, fundraising planning and school council meetings or other volunteer duties which are not child related. 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, Sandringham 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.

Upon signing in at the School Office, a non-child related volunteer will be issued with a visitor badge which must be displayed at all times while on site.

### ***Working with students***

Sandringham Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, with reading, class activities, sports events, camps, excursions, school concerts and other events and programs which involve working with students. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Sandringham Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which include a Working With Children Check that is registered with Sandringham Primary School.

Sandringham Primary School also reserves the right to undertake additional suitability checks including proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

All volunteers working with students must have a valid WWC Check that is registered with Sandringham Primary School and bring their WWC details with them to the School Office upon arrival when volunteering.

Upon signing in at the School Office, a Working With Students volunteer will be issued with a lanyard which must be displayed at all times while volunteering.

For more information on how to apply for a WWC check and how to register Sandringham Primary School to your WWC card please refer to this [flyer](#).

It is important to note that Sandringham Primary School is not immediately notified of your WWC application or the adding of Sandringham Primary School to your WWC check.

Sandringham Primary School's WWC register will be updated with your details when and if we receive the written approval from the Department of Justice and Community Safety, which is posted to us via mail.

You can not volunteer to work with students until we receive written notification from the Department of Justice and Community Safety.

## 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 reasonably 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, Sandringham 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 Policy / Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, 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 Sandringham 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 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 the Business Manager to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

## 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 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 relevant staff

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2022
Consultation	November 2022
Approved by	School Council 22nd November 2022
Next scheduled review date (2 year cycle)	March 2024