

Date June 2019	<b>MELTON WEST PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS POLICY</b>
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## 1. PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Melton West 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.

## 2. POLICY STATEMENT

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

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

## 3. IMPLEMENTATION

### **Becoming a volunteer**

- Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to make an appointment at the office to speak with one of the Principal class members at Melton West Primary School

### **Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks**

- Note: The *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) only sets out the minimum requirements for WWC Checks. The Child Safe Standards are another law relevant to schools that requires appropriate screening measures/suitability checks to be undertaken in relation to volunteers and visitors.
- Melton West Primary School requires all volunteers working at the school to have a valid Working With Children's Check (WWC).

### **Working with students**

- Melton West Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms and with other events such as sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/and programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005*

(Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Melton West 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 Melton West Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require 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. (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. 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 as long as they are under direct teacher supervision.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not. 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 as long as they are under direct teacher supervision.
- **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. Under the WWC Act, school council members are not required to have a WWC Check. However, it is recommended that School Council members obtain a WWC Check in circumstances where they will be working alongside student School Council members. This would support compliance with the Child Safe Standards, which require schools to implement practices for a child-safe environment, including making appropriate suitability checks (at the discretion of the school) for any work performed by an adult where children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

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**

- By law, volunteers who are not engaged in child-related work (e.g. fete planning and organisation) do not need a WWC Check under the WWC Act. However, the Child Safe Standards require appropriate suitability checks (at the discretion of the school) for any

**child-connected** work, which is work, performed where children are present or reasonably expected to be present. 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, 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, Melton West 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 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 a person is suitable to volunteer at Melton West Primary School. 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 Melton West Primary School 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.

### Supporting Documents and references

- Minimum Standards for school registration
- Ministerial Order 870 - Child Safe Standards (Standard 4)
- Duty of care
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
- *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*

<b>Date Reviewed: (School Council Endorsement)</b>	17 <sup>TH</sup> June 2019
<b>Date of Last Review</b>	June 2019
<b>Next Review Due Date</b>	June 2022
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal
<b>Frequency of Review</b>	Three year review cycle
<b>References</b>	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide

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Primary School