



FOOTSCRAY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Volunteers Policy



Purpose

To outline the processes that Footscray 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.

Definition

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 organized 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 organization 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 from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

Policy

Footscray Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Footscray 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 Footscray 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 contact the office and leave their details and what area they would like to support with. Footscray Primary School will also ask for volunteers when they need assistance for specific events.

Working with students

Footscray Primary School values the many volunteers that assist within our school community e.g.: in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/garden club, 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, Footscray 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 Footscray 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
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with classroom or other school activities, excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

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 meetings, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups. These are situations which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Footscray Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will not be required to provide a WWC check.

However it is the Principal's discretion to request a WWC check, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks in any of the above circumstances.

Management and supervision

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the Principal. This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our

Child Safety Standards/Code of Conduct and Community Code of Conduct.

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 Footscray Primary School.

Footscray Primary School will provide any appropriate induction for all volunteer workers. The Principal will determine what induction is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Footscray Primary School's Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures.

The Principal 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

Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy & Procedures

Code of Conduct

Visitors Policy

Review Cycle

This policy was reviewed in February 2019 by the school leadership team. This was approved at School Council in March, 2019. This is due for review in 2022.