

VOLUNTEERS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Kingswood Primary School at kingswood.ps@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Kingswood 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

Kingswood Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Kingswood Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do. Our aim is to enhance the educational programs at the school,

build partnerships and provide opportunities for community members to become active participants in school-based activities and events.

KINGSWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS POLICY

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Kingswood 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 ensure they are connected to Compass App so that they are aware of the opportunities to volunteer for school events, e.g. working bees, fund raising events such as fetes, Father's Day, Mother's Day stalls, etc. and excursions e.g. gala days, camps and general excursions. It is best that they approach

the person indicated on the message, e.g. Fundraising Coordinator, Buildings and Grounds Coordinator or classroom teacher, as soon as possible to offer their support.

If they would like to volunteer to help in the classroom then it is appropriate to contact the classroom teacher and office so that they can be sent the Parent Helper Guidelines and complete the online quiz.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

We expect all volunteers at Kingswood Primary School to have a Working with Children Check.

Working with students

Kingswood 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, Kingswood 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 Kingswood 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 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 example, e.g.: volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other groups that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present. At Kingswood Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will not be required to provide a valid WWC Check. However, Kingswood Primary school reserve the right to undertake suitable checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Checks, at its discretion if 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 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 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 Kingswood Primary School.

Kingswood 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 who are working with children are required to complete our volunteer program, which is an induction in relation to Kingswood Primary School's expectations of volunteers, including child safety practices, reporting obligations, relative policies, OHS and procedures. The school office will maintain a record of volunteers and the completion of the online quiz. All volunteers are required to sign into school, using the Compass Kiosk, and wear an identifying name lanyard. For excursions or offsite events, volunteers are required to type 'EX' after their name when signing in.

Volunteers may not necessarily have their own children/child in their group.

Between August and April, volunteers are required to wear a wide-brimmed hat in line with the school SunSmart Policy.

Photos/videos can only be taken on a school device and volunteers are not permitted to share or distribute any image of students engaging in school-based activities.

Any parent who wants a volunteer to take home their child from an excursion or event, must email written consent to Kingswoodps.education.vic.gov.au and the volunteer must be an emergency contact for the child/children.

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.
- FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safety Code of Conduct

COMMUNICATION

This Policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook
- Discussed at staff meetings / briefings as required
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated June 2021 and is scheduled for review in June 2024.