# 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-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 (i.e. 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.

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 the Compass App so that they are aware of the opportunities to volunteer for school events, e.g. fund-raising events, Father's Day, Mother's Day stalls, etc. and excursions e.g. gala days, camps and general excursions. It is best to approach the person indicated on the message, e.g. Fundraising Coordinator, Buildings and Grounds Coordinator or classroom teacher, as soon as possible to offer support.

To volunteer to help in the classroom contact the classroom teacher and office who will provide the Classroom Helper Guidelines and a link to complete the online quiz.

### Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

***School council members***

All new school council members who have nominated for a role on school council from term 1, 2026 and all returning school council members who nominate for re-election/co-option after this date must have a current valid Working with Children Clearance (WWCC).

***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 *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Kingswood Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence WWCC and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Kingswood Primary School is a child safe environment, we require volunteers to obtain a WWCC and produce their valid card to the office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are <u>not</u> parent/family members** of any student at the school if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.

- **Parent/carer/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.

- **Parent/carer/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

- **Parent/carer/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

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, volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, 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.

Volunteers for this type of work are not required to have WWCC or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Kingswood Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and WWCC, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

## 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 the our Child Safety Induction Pack of our Classroom Helpers Training Program 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, Kingswood Primary School may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

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 Classroom Helpers Training 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.

## Management and supervision

Volunteer workers are expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This includes 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, our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

Volunteer workers are also expected to act consistently with Department 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.

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 Kingswood.ps@education.vic.gov.au and the volunteer must be an emergency contact for the child/children.

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.

## 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
- 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 processes and practices for identifying and responding to child abuse, refer to Kingswood Primary School's Child Abuse (including grooming) – Identification and Response 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 Principal 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'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.

## 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
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## Related policies and resources

Kingswood Primary School policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Visitors Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Abuse (including grooming) – Identification and Response Policy and Procedures
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Kingswood Primary School's Child Safety Induction Pack (Classroom Helpers Training Material)

Department policies:

- Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination
- Child Safe Standards
- Privacy and Information Sharing
- Records Management – School Records
- Sexual Harassment
- Volunteers in Schools
- Volunteer OHS Management
- Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors
- Workplace Bullying

## policy review and approval

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| Policy last reviewed | June 2026 |
| Consultation | Student Learning and Wellbeing subcommittee |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | June 2028 |