

VOLUNTEER POLICY

RATIONALE:

To outline the processes that Ashby 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. This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

Ashby Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Ashby Primary School encourages volunteers to support learning and recognises that external expertise can be beneficial and enhance learning opportunities.

GUIDELINES:

- To provide a safe a secure environment for volunteers at Ashby Primary School's whilst maintaining a strong teaching and learning environment for students and staff.
- To establish protocols and procedures that effectively monitor and manage volunteers, while not compromising the open and inviting nature of Ashby Primary School.
- The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Ashby Primary School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Actively encourage an inviting and open school, while keeping as a highest priority the safety of students, staff and resources.
- Volunteers are required to make contact through appropriate channels including permissions from the principal or arrangements to be approved to work within the school environment.
- Volunteers will be directed to available spaces to conduct appropriate activities and will be made comfortable and welcome within these spaces.
- Volunteers will be provided with directions, an induction if necessary, and will be made aware of any construction works etc. that may impact on their safety or comfort.
- The process for managing and monitoring volunteers will be regularly published in the school newsletter and available at the Administration office.
- Volunteers within the school who have failed to follow the sign in process will be redirected to the school office by a staff member, where the issue will be resolved.
- Under the Summary Offences Act 1966, the Principal reserves the right, and has the authority to prohibit any potential visitor from entering or remaining within the school, and also has the authority to invite or exclude people from using or being within the school boundaries outside school operating hours.
- Under the Summary Offences Act 1966, the Principal may order persons to leave the school, orally or in writing. If the person refuses to leave the school premises after receiving the warning, staff should contact Victoria Police for further assistance.
- The school's emergency management procedures will ensure that volunteers within the school at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and appropriately catered for.

Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to make initial contact with relevant staff or principal to outline their intentions. Once a common agreement is established, further direction will be provided to support volunteers to Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks.

Working with students

Ashby Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, with sports events, camps, excursions, school concerts, other events and academic programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Ashby 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 Ashby Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to office staff 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 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/family volunteers who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- Parent/family volunteers who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- 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.

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, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, 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, Ashby 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 TERRI values. 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 Ashby Primary School.

Ashby 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 will be provided induction in relation to Ashby Primary School's 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.

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 (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.

EVALUATION:-

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle or more often if needed due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

CERTIFICATION

The policy was ratified at the School Council meeting held at Ashby Primary School on the October 7, 2019 day of review 2022.