



OSBORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL 2655

# Volunteers Policy

## **PURPOSE**

To outline the processes that Osborne 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.

## **STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

Osborne Primary School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children

Osborne Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Every person involved in Osborne Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

## **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**

Osborne Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Osborne 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 Osborne 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 speak to their child's class teacher, Assistant Principal/s or the Principal, or alternatively please contact the school directly on 5975 1792.

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

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. To ensure compliance with both pieces of legislation and Department policy, schools may choose to go above the minimum requirements under the WWC Act, depending on the nature and risk of the activities the volunteer will be engaged in.

### **Working with students**

Osborne Primary School values the many volunteers that assist with the many varied school activities throughout the year. To ensure that Osborne Primary is meeting its legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Osborne 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 Osborne 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 where a copy is made and kept on file, 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* and must not be changed]
- **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* and must not be changed]
- **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

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**

At law, volunteers who are not engaged in child-related work (eg 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, assisting with BBQ's on Election Days, weekend maintenance activities, 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, Osborne 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.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of school council will be asked to provide a valid WWC Check. Whilst we acknowledge that these volunteers will not be engaging in child-related work as part of their role, even when there is a student sitting on the school council, we believe that it is important that our volunteers who are involved in making important decisions about our school which will have an impact on students do have a valid WWC Check and comply with all Child Safe Standards.

### **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 Osborne Primary School's policies, including, but not limited to our;

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Volunteers Code of Conduct.
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Mandatory reporting Policy

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 Osborne Primary School.

Osborne 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 Osborne Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Osborne Primary school adheres to Child Safe Standard 5 'Procedures When Disclosure Is Made' which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

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.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

- Child Safe Environment Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Volunteers Code of Conduct.
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Reporting and Obligations Policy ( Previously Mandatory Reporting Policy)
- External Providers Policy
- Working With Children Check Policy
- Visitors Policy

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last approved by school council in October 2018 and is scheduled for review as part of the review process.

<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	(School Council President)
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	
<b>Review Date</b>	2020