



Williamstown Primary School

Volunteers Policy

1. BACKGROUND

Williamstown Primary School recognises that education is a collaborative partnership involving staff, parents, caregivers and members of the community. Through the additional skills and perspective of volunteers and visitors their contribution can significantly add to the human resources available to the school. Volunteers require encouragement, effective management, support and recognition.

While the School encourages an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages volunteers and visitors, it also recognises that the School has legal obligations to comply with, including its duty of care to its staff and students to provide a safe and secure environment at all times. At the same time, it is important that volunteers and visitors feel welcome and comfortable in a friendly school environment that values their input.

2. PURPOSE

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide a safe and secure environment for our students, staff and resources.
- To ensure the school complies with the Child Safe Standards 1,2 & 6.
- Establish procedures and practices at the School that comply with its legal obligations, (including in relation to the Working With Children Act 2005) and minimise the risk of injury or harm to students and staff arising from the presence of Volunteers or Visitors participating in activities organised by the School (either on the School's grounds or an alternative location).
- Ensure volunteers understand their role and have appropriate training and support from the School's staff to enable them to effectively perform activities required of them.
- Encourage and maximise the number of volunteers assisting with School activities.
- To explain the legal rights of volunteer workers in the school.
- To provide assurance to our volunteer workers regarding their legal rights and responsibilities.
- To ensure Williamstown Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines and legislative requirements of the
 - Education and Training Reform Act 2006 - sections 5.6.2, 5.6.3
 - Workers Compensation Act 1958
 - Wrongs Act 1958 – section 37(1)
 - Ministerial Order 870 –Child Safe Standards

3. DEFINITIONS

A “volunteer” is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work, without payment or reward.

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 any 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 fundraising and assisting with excursions, are well protected from legal action by others.

Important: “Voluntary” work carried out to meet Centrelink requirements

People who perform unpaid work in schools under the “Work for the Dole” program and “Community Work” programs administered by Centrelink have insurance cover provided by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and may perform work in schools.

Other Centrelink benefit recipients involved in “voluntary” work in order to fulfil their recipient obligations **are not** covered by an Australian Government insurance scheme. Schools may however accept this group of Centrelink benefit recipients to work as volunteers in Victorian government schools and note that they are insured by the Department.

“School” means Williamstown Primary School.

4. PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- The safety of children is the highest priority for this school.
- Volunteers are actively encouraged to partake in school activities, and will be invited to do so.
- The School will regularly communicate opportunities for Volunteers to participate in activities including by publishing notices in the weekly Newsletter, advising parents at year level information evenings and in other informal ways. The compliance requirements outlined in this Policy for Volunteers/Visitors at the School will be regularly published in the School Newsletter.
- **All volunteers must have a current Working with Children Check and this must be recorded at the school office prior to volunteer work being undertaken.**
- Volunteers will be required to register at the administration office daily and wear a visitors badge whilst in the school. Volunteers will be invited to use the staff room and facilities.
- Prior to the commencement of any volunteering activities, the School will provide appropriate training/orientation programs for Volunteers to enable them to understand their role and to provide clarity about what is expected and how they can positively contribute to the School’s programs. This training should cover a range of issues relating to the activity and may include confidentiality, privacy, safety and legal liability.
- As part of this training, all Volunteers are to receive a copy of this policy (and any other relevant School documents) clarifying their obligations as a Volunteer.
- In addition, staff directly supervising Volunteers performing activities either in the classroom or elsewhere will, prior to the commencement (and as required), provide clear direction and support regarding what is required and expected in performing the activities.
- All volunteers assisting in School activities inside the classroom are required to sign the School’s Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix 1) prior to commencing work at the School.
- It is the responsibility of the School to maintain and keep updated a register of all WWCC/Police Records Checks held by Volunteers or Visitors. The School Office staff must sight and retain copies of a WWCC Card and Police Records Check (where required under this policy or by law) and place them on the School’s register.
- The School’s Emergency Management procedures will ensure that all Volunteers/Visitors within the School at any time of an emergency or an emergency practice drill will be recognised and included.
- All School staff will be encouraged to be proactive and make enquiries of any unidentified Volunteer or Visitor (i.e. any person at the School who they believe may fall under the definition of Volunteer or Visitor and who is not wearing a badge

identifying them as such) and refer them to the Administration Office to comply with the School's policy.

- Volunteer workers are covered by DET'S Workers Compensation policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work or when travelling to or from the place where the school work is to occur.
- Volunteer school workers are not liable in any civil proceedings for anything done, or not done, in good faith in providing a community service.
- If a volunteer school worker suffers damage to his or her property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister may authorise such compensation as the Minister thinks reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature are to be directed to:
 - The Manager
 - Liability Services Unit
 - Executive and Ministerial Services
 - Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
 - Level 3, 2 Treasury Place
 - East Melbourne 3002
- It is the responsibility of the School Council appointed Coordinator to ensure that volunteers working at working bees comply with OH&S requirements. Please refer to the website below with links to Volunteer Workers and Working Bees.
- Please also refer to the school's *Child Safe Policy* and the *Working with Children Check-Volunteers Policy*

Reference:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/community/Pages/volunteers.aspx
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx>
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/hr/pages/hr.aspx
www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/Pages/crimcheck.aspx

and the

Suitability for Employment Policy (Manual) 2 February 2016

REVIEW AND POLICY HISTORY

This policy is due for formal review in February 2019 although it may be changed at any time as required after discussion with School Council and the Principal or if guidelines change (latest DET update August 2016)

Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
August 2014	New Policy
August 2015	Policy Update
April 2016	Policy Update (November 2015)
September 2016	
	Policy Update (August 2016- Child Safe)