



VOLUNTEERS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

AUGUST 2021

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Strathaird 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

Strathaird Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Strathaird Primary School recognises the importance of volunteers in our school and also 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 Strathaird 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 do the Reading Helpers course held at beginning of each year, apply for a volunteer WWC Check and nominate Strathaird Primary School as a location you volunteer at.

Volunteers may be needed for assistance with specific events, if you are interested, please approach your child/s classroom teacher.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

Working with students

Strathaird 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, Strathaird Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working With Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity and work history involving children checks.

Where prospective volunteers are required under the law and this policy to have a WWC Clearance, the principal has the discretion to accept evidence of a WWC check application in order to commence volunteer work, provided the volunteer provides the school with evidence of the application outcome (clearance or exclusion) as soon as practicable after the applicant receives it. Except for camps all volunteers must have a WWC Clearance.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Strathaird Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require all volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the school Administration office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not 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/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, eg: volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Strathaird Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Clearance/proof of ID/references/work history.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Council will be asked to provide evidence of a valid WWC Clearance. 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 Clearance and if working with cash a current police check.

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 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 Strathaird Primary School.

Strathaird 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 and will ensure a record is kept of the induction undertaken.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Strathaird Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

Strathaird Primary School OHS induction/training to be provided to volunteers annually or as required.

Reading Helpers sessions will be held at the beginning of each year to enable volunteers who wish to volunteer in classrooms.

The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

Teachers and Staff conducting the program/activity will check with office staff to ensure selected volunteers have a current WWC Clearance prior to commencement of the program/activity.

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.

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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Strathaird Primary School policies:

All school policies relating to this policy can be found on the schools website: www.strathairdps.vic.edu.au [including *Statement of Values, Visitors Policy, Child Safe Policy, Child*

Safety Code of Conduct] Statement of Acceptance Parent/Community Member approved for Excursions and activities. (Appendix 1)

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [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

Policy last reviewed	27/07/2021
Consultation	10 th August 2021
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	27/07/2025

EXCURSIONS/ACTIVITIES

Roles and responsibilities statement

For

Volunteers, Parents & Community Members

While all excursions vary the roles and responsibilities of volunteer/ parent/ community members attending are always important and the points below need to be followed.

- The teacher in charge of the excursion will be recognised as the Excursion Coordinator and all volunteer/ parent / community members will be expected to follow all reasonable directions.
- The Excursion Coordinator will explain the excursion details and volunteer/ parent /community member expectations. Before attending any excursion volunteer/ parents / community members must be familiar with the excursion organisation and the duties and responsibilities of volunteers/ parents / community members assisting at that excursion.
- Volunteers/ parents / community members attending excursions have a 'duty of care' responsibilities to all the students attending the excursion and in particular to the students directly in their care.
- Volunteers/ parents/ community members must ensure that the students at the excursion and in their care remain safe during the excursion.

This may entail:

- counting the number of students in their group frequently, and ensure that they are keeping track of all members of the group
- supervising toilet stops (at least 2 children at one time to go into a toilet)
- accepting only suitable behaviour from the students in their care
- reporting to the Excursion Coordinator any students who are displaying inappropriate or concerning behaviour
- be prepared to administer basic first aid if a minor accident occurs
- be aware of appropriate Discipline procedures if children under their care act inappropriately or contravene school rules



STRATHAIRD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Volunteer/ Parent / Community Members

Statement of Acceptance for Volunteer/ Parent / Community Members approved for Excursions and Activities.

I understand the Roles and Duty of Care responsibilities required of a Volunteer/ Parent / Community member helper approved for excursions and activities at Strathaird Primary School as per: **Volunteer Policy 2021, Visitors Policy 2021, Roles & Responsibilities Statement for Volunteers, Child Safe Standards,**

I am prepared to apply for a 'Working with Children Check and nominate Strathaird Primary School as the location I am volunteering at. I will ensure a copy of my card is provided to the school and I will keep the WWC site up to date with any changes.

Whilst on site I will wear Visitor/ Volunteer Lanyard at all times.

Signed:..... Date: ___/___/20___

Please enter the children/s name, year level and relationship to child in boxes below.

SURNAME	FIRST NAME	YEAR LEVEL	Relationship to student

Office Use Only:

SC Spreadsheet Updated Date: ___/___/20___

Entered by: _____

- WWC number: _____ Expiry Date: _____
- VIT number: _____ Expiry Date: _____
- Exempt - police officer / Under 18