

VOLUNTEERS POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school principal on 03 9314 4919.

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Yarraville Special Developmental 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

Yarraville Special Developmental School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Yarraville Special Developmental 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 Yarraville Special Developmental 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 approach a member of our leadership team.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Under the directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, volunteers attending school to work are required to be vaccinated or provide evidence that they are medically exempted. Our school is required to collect, record and hold vaccination information from relevant visitors and volunteers to ensure they meet these requirements.

For further information on this process, refer to the Department policy on COVID-19 mandatory vaccinations for visitors, including advice on the type of information that schools are required to collect, record and hold, refer to: (click on the blue hyperlink)

- [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers Working on School Sites](#)

Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

Working with students

Yarraville Special Developmental School values the many volunteers that assist with school community events such as excursions, sports, CERES and other events and school based programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Yarraville Special Developmental 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.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Yarraville Special Developmental School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the 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.

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer (including parent/family volunteers) 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, Yarraville Festival, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, 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 WWC Clearances or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Yarraville Special Developmental School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and WWC Clearance, 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: (click on blue hyperlinks)

[Statement of Values](#)

[Child Safety Policy](#)

[Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

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 Yarraville Special Developmental School.

Yarraville Special Developmental 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 Yarraville Special Developmental School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a (click on blue hyperlink) [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations \(including Mandatory Reporting\) Policy and Procedures](#) 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

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
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

(click on blue hyperlinks)

- [Statement of Values](#)
- [Child Safety Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations \(including Mandatory Reporting\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Visitors Policy](#)

Department policies: (click on blue hyperlink)

- [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](#)

REVIEW CYCLE: This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

This policy was consulted with School Council on: 23rd November 2021
and will be reviewed in 4 years