



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Purpose

To outline the processes that Springside 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 Springside Primary 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.

Implementation

Springside Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Springside Primary School 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 Springside Primary School 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 complete our Volunteer course, which will place them on the school's volunteer database. The course is offered in Term 1 of each year. Once the course has been completed, volunteers will receive information annually regarding the school's Code of Conduct, Mandatory Reporting and Classroom Support Program policies, where a declaration must be completed and kept on record. When volunteers are needed for events, those listed on the school database will be contacted by the organising teacher. Regularly classroom support opportunities will be offered to listed volunteers via homegroup teachers.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

Springside Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, with sports events, excursions, school concerts and other events and programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the Working With Children Act 2005 (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Springside 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 Springside Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the school's Administration team 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 and similar events or 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

At Springside Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Check. 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.

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, Child Safety Code of Conduct, Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Mandatory Reporting policy, Duty of Care policy and Classroom Support Program 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 Springside Primary School. Springside 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 Springside Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy 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.

Volunteer database

Springside Primary School will maintain a database of approved volunteers. This database will include the volunteers name, relationship to child, WWC check details and annual agreement details. The database of volunteers will be run through the Department of Justice platform on a weekly basis to ensure those listed are still suitable to volunteer at the school.

Resources

- Springside Primary School Statement of Values
- Springside Primary School Visitors Policy
- Springside Primary School Statement of Commitment to Child Safety/Child Safe Policy
- Springside Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Springside Primary School Classroom Support Program Policy

Evaluation

- This policy was last updated in **JUNE 2020**.
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle in **JUNE 2024**.