

# Volunteers Policy

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## Purpose

To outline the processes that Croydon Hills 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

Croydon Hills Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Croydon Hills

Primary School views education as a shared responsibility. The co-operative partnership between parents, carers, volunteers and staff is a highly valued feature of the school.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Croydon Hills 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 respond to advertised expressions of volunteer interest distributed via the school newsletter, Learning Level weekly Compass post, classroom teacher expression of interest and/or approach the school Principal team. Prospective volunteers will be provided with the appropriate information and advice on the requirements of participating in the activity as a volunteer as per this policy.

All approved volunteers must:

- present their Working With Children's Check card annually
- sign in and out at the General Office
- be included on bus manifests,

## Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

### *Working with students*

Croydon Hills Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, at sporting events, on camps and excursions and at 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, Croydon Hills 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 Croydon Hills Primary School is a child-safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check 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 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 assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council, Croydon Hills Parents' Association (CHAPS) and Men Of The Hills (MOTHS).

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.

The school office will maintain a WWC register that is checked twice annually.

### **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. At Croydon Hills Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Check or equivalent. At Croydon Hills Primary School we are unwilling to accommodate, host or involve people that have a past indiscretion that prevents them from being associated with children. A valid WWC mitigates this.

### **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 Safe and Mandatory Reporting Policy and Guidelines, our Child Safety Code of Conduct, our Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, 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 Croydon Hills Primary School. ambiguous

Croydon Hills Primary School will provide an 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 Croydon Hills Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy incorporated into our Child Safe and Mandatory Reporting Policy and Guidelines 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 and Mandatory Reporting Policy and Guidelines
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Camp Volunteer

## Review cycle

Ratified by School Council - March 2020

Review Date - March 2022