

Croydon Hills Primary School

Volunteers Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, contact croydon.hills.ps@education.vic.gov.au

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-connected work: work authorised by the school governing authority/provider of a school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

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,

COVID-19 vaccination information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to COVID-19 Vaccination requirements, relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.

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

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 (WWC) Clearance. Additional suitability checks may also be required depending on the volunteer role, such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children 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.

Training and Induction

Under the Child Safe Standards volunteers must have an appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.

To support us to maintain a child safe environment, before engaging in any work where children are present or reasonable likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Child Safety Policy suite and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school.

Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Croydon Hills Primary School may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

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 (or their nominee) will determine the level of school staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.

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.

Privacy and information-sharing

Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of because of their volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) and the Department's policy on [Privacy and Information Sharing](#).

Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:

- support the student's education, wellbeing and health;
- reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors;
- make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
- provide a safe and secure workplace.

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the school such as to Victoria Police. For further information on child safety responding and reporting obligations refer to: *Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures*.

Records management

While it is unlikely volunteers will be responsible for any school records during their volunteer work, any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to the Principal to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

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 school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook
- Annual reference in school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

Related policies and resources

Croydon Hills Primary School policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Visitors Policy
- Child Safe Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy,
- School Child Safety Induction Pack

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

Review cycle

Consultation	- 13- 20 February (Staff) - 21 February (School Council)
Ratified by Principal	- February 2024
Review Date	- February 2026