



Falls Creek Primary School

Volunteers Policy

Purpose of this policy

To outline the processes that Falls Creek 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

Falls Creek Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. We also recognise 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 our volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

Becoming a volunteer

Volunteers are actively encouraged to partake in school activities, and will be invited to do so, formally through the newsletter, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Child-related work

Volunteers assisting at school and with school camps and excursions are required to provide a satisfactory Working with Children check prior to their participation. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC check, e.g. police officers and teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption. To minimise risk to students and improve the school's Child Safe practices, School Council has determined that parents who volunteer in activities in which their child is participating will **not** be exempt from obtaining a WWC Check.

The Volunteer Working with Children Check application form can be found at: <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

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, working bees, school council, 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 Working with Children or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Falls Creek Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Checks, 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 our Child Safe Policy and 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 our school.

Falls Creek 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 Falls Creek Primary School 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.

Volunteers will be provided with support, professional development or instruction as necessary to help them carry out their tasks at school in a confident and effective manner.

Volunteers for Camps and Excursions may be required to read and sign the **Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement for School Volunteers**. See Appendix A.

The Principal will induct volunteer workers using the Volunteer Work OHS Induction Checklist prior to working on site and volunteers will be provided with details of the Emergency Management Plan and procedures.

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

Links

School Policy and Advisory Guide links:

- [DET Volunteer Workers Policy](#)
- [DET Volunteer Checks Policy](#)
- [DET Volunteer Worker OHS Procedures](#)
- [DET Volunteer Worker OHS Induction Checklist](#)
- [DET Child Safe Standards](#)

Other [school policies](#) which are connected with this policy are:

- Child Safe Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Process for Responding to and Reporting Incidents
- Child Protection Reporting Policy
- Acceptable use for Digital Technology Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Student Engagement & Inclusion policy
- Supervision and Duty of Care policy
- Privacy policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last approved by school council on 23rd February 2021 and is scheduled for review in February 2024.

Appendix A:



Falls Creek Primary School

Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement for School Volunteers

Falls Creek Primary School welcomes parent support in the classroom, on camps and excursions and at fundraising and extra-curricular activities.

Code of Conduct

Volunteers for Falls Creek Primary School are expected to:

- Perform their duties to the best of their ability and be accountable for their performance.
- Follow reasonable instructions given by staff.
- Comply with lawful directions.
- Work collaboratively with staff and other volunteers.
- Be courteous and respectful in dealing with staff, students, parents and members of the community. Rude or insulting behaviour, verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening, intimidating or derogatory language, swearing and physical abuse or intimidation is unacceptable.
- Maintain a professional relationship with the students. This includes the use of appropriate and respectful language when speaking with students, avoiding situations where they will be alone in an enclosed space with a student, treating students without favouritism, and not imposing physical punishment on a student. Volunteers must not develop a relationship with any student (other than their own child) that is, or that could be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student. Volunteers must not invite students to their home or visit students at their home unless they have the express permission of their parents or are doing so as a normal part of their parental relationship to their own child.
- Be aware of their duty of care to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted.
- Act within Occupational Health and Safety guidelines to take care of their own health and safety whilst in a volunteer role.
- Refrain from smoking on school grounds; or use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time.

Volunteers must not discriminate against, harass, or bully for any reason any staff member, contractor, other volunteer, student or parent. Volunteers must make themselves aware of the school's [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#).

Child Safe Standards

The school is committed to ensuring a safe environment in which all children are protected from abuse and neglect, consistent with the Child Safe Standards in the Victorian *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015*, which amended the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005*.

School volunteers must make themselves aware of the school's [Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct and Child Safe Process for Responding to and Reporting Incidents](#).

Volunteers must report any concerns they may have about any employee, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' that has been made to you, to the Principal. This includes self-disclosure if the allegation involves the volunteer making the report. 'Reportable conduct' includes:

- Any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed again, with, or in the presence of, a child (including a child pornography offence)
- Any assault, ill treatment or neglect of a child
- Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child, whether or not the child consents.

Confidentiality

In the course of volunteering at the school you may access personal information of students, staff and others in the community. There are legislative requirements that prescribe how an individual's personal information can be collected, used, disclosed, stored and accessed.

Personal information is any information that identifies an individual. It may be, but is not limited to, enrolment and health information, and information about student progress, ability and behaviour.

All personal information must be treated in a confidential manner. It should only be used for the purpose it was disclosed to you in your role as a volunteer.

Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that by signing this Code of Conduct and Confidentiality Agreement, I have read and understand the Falls Creek Primary School Volunteers Policy. I agree that I will abide by the Code of Conduct and that any information that I may have accessed in the course of volunteering with school activities, both in and out of the classroom, will be treated in a confidential manner. I agree that I will not disclose or discuss any such information.

Signature

Date

Name