

2019

Volunteers Policy

Principal: Joel Riddle

School Council President: Rob Duthie



Rationale:

To outline the processes that Lara 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.

They add significantly to the human resources available to the school, and consequently volunteers deserve encouragement, effective management, support and recognition.

Aims:

- To maximise the number and variety of effective volunteers who contribute to our school.
- To provide volunteers with the support and recognition they deserve.

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:

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Lara 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:

- Volunteers are actively encouraged to partake in school activities, and will be invited to do so.
- Volunteers will be sought formally through the newsletter, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.
- The school will seek to provide a variety of opportunities for volunteer participation, particularly opportunities for fathers, grandparents, and opportunities for volunteers to be involved in classes of older children or specialist classes.

Suitability Checks Including Working with Children Cards:

- School Council requires that all Volunteers doing child related work or directly involved in School camps, excursions, sleep-overs, teaching of swimming lessons, transport of students without staff members present (rare), extra-curricular activities (e.g. school sporting events) and classroom activities must, unless they qualify for an exemption, have a valid WWCC.

- All people required to have a WWCC will present their valid WWCC card to the School office staff who will photocopy the card and add that person's name to the school's register of 'approved volunteers' and record the expiry date of the WWCC.

Working with Students:

Lara Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/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, Lara 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 Lara 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 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 (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 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.

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, Lara 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. This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety Policy, 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 Lara Primary School.

Lara 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 Lara Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures.

The principal 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.

Review of This Policy

This policy will be reviewed every third year or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in...	March 2019
This policy will be reviewed by School Council in...	March 2022