



VOLUNTEERS POLICY



PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Laurimar 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

Laurimar Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children, staff and volunteers. Laurimar Primary School also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do.



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The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Laurimar 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 must:

- Provide a WWCC upon request which will be documented and photocopied for our records
- Always sign in at the office Compass Kiosk and present to the office
- Collect a visitors lanyard with Evacuation Information

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

Laurimar Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, or 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, Laurimar Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which include a Working With Children Check and may be required of proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Laurimar 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/family volunteers** 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



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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

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example, non-child-related work at your school eg: volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings 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, Laurimar 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.

OR

At Laurimar Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Check and may be required to provide proof of ID, references, work history.

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](#) and our Child Safety Code of Conduct. 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 Laurimar Primary School.

Laurimar 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.



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All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Laurimar 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 steps the school take include:

- Policies included on the school's website
- Details at the Compass Kiosk when signing in and out for perusal

The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

Parent Helpers

Laurimar Primary School encourages the assistance of Parent Helpers in a wide variety of areas. Invitations for parents to assist in the school's programs will be regularly made via the school's newsletter, or through personal contact.

Parent Helpers for short-term projects such as day excursions, helping with reading, assistance with fete activities, working bees, etc will all be briefed by the teacher in charge as to their roles and responsibilities prior to commencement. At the same time, matters of supervision and safety will also be discussed. Parent Helpers for longer term activities or activities with higher levels of required expertise such as literacy rotations or school camps will be required to undertake appropriate training.

All Parent Helpers must complete the Parent Helper Training course and sign a Confidentiality Agreement, which states the school's protocols when working with children both in and outside of the classroom. A Parent Helper list will be maintained and ratified by the School Council, with Parent Helpers receiving frequent feedback and reinforcement. Parent Helpers in need of additional assistance will be provided with reasonable advice and guidance. Concerns relating to Parent Helpers should be addressed to the principal and those who are not reliable or do not meet the schools expectations will be required to relinquish their role.

All Parent Helpers will be required to sign into the school via the Compass Kiosk and wear an identifying lanyard. The WWC should be on the person at all times and be available upon request.

Parent Helpers must have a current Working with Children Check and this will be attached to the parent's signed 'Confidentiality Agreement' and held in the office. Parents will be required to complete a refresher course in line with the expiration of their current Working With Children Check.



VOLUNTEERS POLICY



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

- [Statement of Values](#)
- [Visitors Policy](#)
- [Statement of Commitment to Child Safety - SCHOOL WEBSITE](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last approved by the school council in March 2020 and is scheduled for review in March 2023.