Melton Primary School
No. 430
"Onward with pride"

Volunteers Policy

Aims

To outline the processes that Melton 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.

Implementation

Volunteer school workers are not liable in any civil proceedings for anything done, or not done, in good faith in providing a community service.

Definitions

Volunteer- A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work, without payment or reward.

School work is defined as -

- 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 any 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.

Important: "Voluntary" work carried out to meet Centrelink requirements
People who perform unpaid work in schools under the "Work for the Dole" program and "Community Work" programs administered by Centrelink have insurance cover provided by the Federal Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, and may perform work in schools.
Other Centrelink benefit recipients involved in "voluntary" work in order to fulfill their recipient obligations are not covered by an Australian Government insurance scheme. Schools may

however accept this group of Centrelink benefit recipients to work as volunteers in Victorian government schools and note that they are insured by the Department.

Melton Primary School will:

Ensure that visitors sign in on the Compass Kiosk each time they visit, ensuring they have read the child safe standards when signing in.
Ensure volunteers sign out of the Compass Kiosk when they leave.
Ensure that all volunteers complete an OH&S induction form.
Check to ensure that the volunteers WWCC is valid.

Becoming a Volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to make contact with their child's classroom teacher to see how they can assist.

Melton 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 *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Melton Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Melton Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the school office.

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, first aid certificate, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example 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 WWC Clearances or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Melton Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and WWC Clearance, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

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 reasonably likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the

policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our induction process 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, Melton 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 Safety and Wellbeing 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 (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 Melton 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.*

Compensation

Personal Injury-Volunteer school workers are covered by the Department'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 legislation

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* - sections 5.6.2, 5.6.3
- *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*
- *Wrongs Act 1958* – section 37(1)

Policy review and approval

Policy last reviewed	18th June 2025
Approved by	Principal and School Council
Next scheduled review date	June 2027

Volunteers Confidentiality Statement

As a volunteer in the Melton Primary School community you may occasionally access personal information of students, staff, and others in the school community. There are legislative requirements that prescribe how an individual's personal information can be collected, used and disclosed, stored and accessed. Personal information includes health information.

Personal Information is any information that identifies an individual; it may be student enrolment information, student health information or parent information. Schools, and school councils, have a responsibility to ensure the personal information they possess is used for the purposes it was collected and is adequately secured.
What do I need to do as a volunteer?

- Ensure you have only that personal information required to undertake your role as a volunteer
- Do not disclose any personal information that you may happened to have accessed in your role as a volunteer
- Do not disclose any information regarding the discussion of sensitive issues

If in doubt about the handling of personal and sensitive information, seek advice from the principal.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

WWCC Number: EXP: _____

At all times the office must have a current, readable copy of your card. Thank you.