

SCHOOL OPERATIONS AND STUDENT ADMINISTRATION

Volunteers Policy

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Springvale Rise 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 (i.e. indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

POLICY

Springvale Rise Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do. Springvale Rise Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. The procedures set out below are designed

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to ensure that Springvale Rise 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 contact our office staff, who will forward all details onto the relevant Assistant Principal responsible for each campus.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Springvale Rise 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 Springvale Rise Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to office staff when signing in on arrival for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parents/closely related family members** of any student at the school if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.
- **Volunteers who are parents/closely related family members of a student at the school** and 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.
- **Volunteers who are parents/closely related family members of any student at the school** and who are assisting with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating in the activity or not.
- **Volunteers who are parents/closely related family members of any student at the school** and who regularly assist in school-based activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating in the activity 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.

Working with students

Springvale Rise Primary School values volunteers that assist, for example:

- in our classrooms, such as by reading with children or working with a small group
- with sporting events
- during excursions
- with other events and programs such as breakfast club.

Non child-related work

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Springvale Rise Primary School requests volunteers for non-child related work provide proof of identity; providing personal details, including their full name, their contact details and the details of their emergency contact. Referee checks would be required from volunteers who are not parents / guardians and are not linked to a local service provider / partner organisation.

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child related. For example, 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, Springvale Rise Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks and Working with Children Checks, at its discretion if considered necessary for any activity or circumstance.

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*, *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and *Statement of Values and School Philosophy Policy*. 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 decide the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time, whether a person is, or is not, suitable to volunteer at Springvale Rise Primary School.

Springvale Rise Primary School will provide 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 Springvale Rise Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a *Child Safe and Mandatory Reporting Policy* which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

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.

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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.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library:
 - [Supervision of Students](#)
 - [Duty of Care](#)
 - [Child Safe Standards](#)
 - [Visitors in Schools](#)
- Springvale Rise Primary School's local policies found on the school's [website](#):
 - Duty of Care policy
 - Child Safe and Mandatory Reporting policy
 - Camps, Excursions and Incursions policy
 - Child Safety Code of Conduct
 - Statement of Values and School Philosophy policy.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in May 2021 and is scheduled for review prior to the next school review, or if guidelines change.