



Volunteers Policy

Debney Meadows Primary School

Definition:

A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work, without payment or reward. 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 organized 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 organization which receives government financial support.

This is a broad definition, and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such fundraising and assisting with excursions, are well protected from legal action by others.

Rationale:

- Volunteers 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.

Implementation:

- Volunteers are actively encouraged to take part in school activities, and will be invited to do so.
- Volunteers will be sought formally through the school 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 for all family and community members.
- Volunteers will be provided with an appropriate induction as well as any support, professional development or instruction necessary to help them carry out their tasks at school in a confident and effective manner.
- Volunteers are required to carry out tasks in a manner consistent with school expectations, including maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential working environment.

- Volunteers will not be required to carry out tasks with which they are uncomfortable or untrained.
- Individual or groups of volunteers will be highlighted in the newsletter, publicising their contributions to the school where appropriate.
- Volunteers who **are not** closely related will be required to register at the administration office daily, and wear a visitors badge whilst in the school.
- Volunteers will be invited to use the staff room and facilities.
- A morning tea will be provided in term 4 to thank volunteers for their contributions throughout the year.
- Volunteer Workers undertaking schoolwork on behalf of, and with the approval of, the school council or principal are indemnified as to their personal liability in similar terms to teachers.
- Some volunteers may require a Working With Children Check – see Exemptions from applying for a WWC Check attached
- A recognised volunteer school worker who suffers injury arising out of or in the course of engaging in any school sanctioned work is entitled to be paid compensation in accordance with the provisions of the Workers Compensation Act 1995.
- If the property owned by, or the property under the control of a volunteer worker is damaged or destroyed in the course of or arising out of the school work, the Minister for Education or school council may authorise reasonable compensation.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in

Exemptions from Applying for a Check

Department of Justice Information Line: 1300 652 879

Reference: www.justice.vic.gov.au

An exemption means that you do not need to apply for a Working with Children (WWC) Check, even if you undertake 'child-related work'. If an exemption applies, a person is not prevented from applying for a WWC Check.

The WWC Check exemptions are:

- **People under the age of 18 years**
- **Parent volunteers whose child ordinarily participates in that activity.**
This exemption only applies to volunteer parents who participate in their children's activities. For example: Brett is a volunteer coach for a school football team on which his son Joshua ordinarily plays. Brett does not have to apply for and pass the WWC Check to do this even if Joshua does not attend some of the practice sessions or games.
- **People 'closely related' to each child they have contact with in their 'child-related work'**
'Closely related' means you are the child's: parent, spouse, step-parent, mother-in-law or father-in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister (including half-siblings and step siblings, brother-in-law or sister-in-law). 'Closely related' also includes de facto relationships. 'Spouse' includes domestic partners, as defined in the *Relationships Act 2008*.

For example: Karen does not need a WWC Check in order to home school her daughter and her nephew as she is closely related to both of the children.
- **18 or 19 year old student volunteers where the volunteer work is at or has been organised by the student's educational institution**
For example: Khalil, 18, is a student at Happy Valley Secondary College. He has been asked to lead a peer support group of Year 7 students. As this activity has been organised by his school, he does not need to apply for a WWC Check to do this.
- **Visiting workers who do not ordinarily live and perform 'child-related work' in Victoria**
For example: Keith lives in New South Wales and coaches a baseball team that is selected to play in a one-off competition to be held in Victoria. Because Keith does not ordinarily live and perform 'child-related work' in Victoria and will only be in Victoria for a few days, he does not need to apply for a WWC Check.
- **Sworn Victoria Police officers (who are not suspended from duty)**
Sworn police officers are exempt from needing a WWC Check for any 'child-related work' as they are already checked by a similar scheme.
- **Members of the Australian Federal Police within the meaning of the *Australian Federal Police Act 1979* (who are not suspended from duty)**
Members of the Australian Federal Police are exempt from needing a WWC Check for any 'child-related work' as they are already checked by a similar scheme.
- **Teachers who have current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching**
Teachers with current registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching are exempt from needing a WWC Check for any 'child-related work' as they are already checked by a similar scheme.
- **Certain drivers who hold a current driver accreditation under the *Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983***

- Certain persons who engage in work of a kind that requires a current driver accreditation under Div 6 or Pt VI of that Act and would ordinarily require a WWC Check are exempt from a WWC Check subject to some exceptions, including where a person has been given a Negative Notice and has not been subsequently given an Assessment Notice.