

Volunteer & Visitor Policy

North Melbourne Primary School

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SCHOOL Nº 1402



PURPOSE

To outline the processes that North Melbourne Primary School will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers and visitors to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers and visitors.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer or visit our school. This policy does not encompass any employees or contractors of the 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
- 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.



Visitors

Visitors to schools may include, but are not limited to:

- prospective parents and employees
- invited speakers
- representatives of community, business and service groups
- local members of the State and Commonwealth Parliaments
- those who are conducting business such as:
 - uniform suppliers
 - booksellers
 - Delivery men and women
 - commercial salespeople

Other visitors may include:

- Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection Workers, and Victoria Police
- persons who are authorised to enter on to the school premises, for a specific purpose (e.g. Worksafe or Environmental Health officers).
- Department staff including allied health practitioners (regional and central offices)
- public officials (e.g. Ministers, Members of Parliament, Mayor)
- National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Therapists and other allied health or health practitioners that are not employees of the Department or school council.

POLICY

North Melbourne Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff, volunteers and visitors. North Melbourne Primary School values the contribution that volunteers and visitors provide to our school community and appreciate the work that they do.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that North Melbourne Primary School's volunteers and visitors 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 speak with a member of leadership at the school or a teacher. Where members of the school community are requested to volunteer for a specific purpose (e.g. extra help on an excursion). Direct contact details for a staff member will be provided.



Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

North Melbourne Primary School values the many volunteers and visitors that assist in our classrooms, with sports events, camps, excursions and 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, North Melbourne 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 for any of our volunteers or visitors

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that North Melbourne Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a Working With Children Check (WWCC) and produce their valid card to the staff member coordinating them for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school are required to have a WWCC 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.

Exceptions

- **School visitors**
School visitors who are not engaged in any child-related work at the school are not required to have a WWCC
- **Parent/family volunteers**
volunteers who are parents, or closely related family members of a child at the school who volunteer as part of an activity that their child is participating in or usually participate in are **not** required to have a WWC Check under the WWC Act (eg parent/community reading in class)
- **Volunteers on weekends**
Any volunteers who give up their time on weekends or non-teaching days where out-of-school hours facilities are also not in operation

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.



Management and supervision

Volunteer workers and visitors will be expected to sign-in and out at the office each time they come to the school. Volunteer workers and visitors will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of North Melbourne Primary School. This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safe Policy and our Code of Conduct. Volunteer workers and visitors 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 or visitor and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at North Melbourne Primary School.

North Melbourne Primary School will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers and visitors. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer or visitor will be engaged in. 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.

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.