



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

PURPOSE

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

POLICY

Mirripoa Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Mirripoa Primary School also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and our work. The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Mirripoa Primary School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and can 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 the school at any time to discuss the possibility of becoming a volunteer. Mirriposa Primary School will at times request assistance for activities or events such as excursions, or classroom helpers.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearance

Working with students

Mirriposa Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/other events and programs at the school's discretion. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Mirriposa Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working with Children Clearance, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Mirriposa 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 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 Clearance 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.

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 such as volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, 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 Clearance or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally

present during these activities. However, Mirriposa Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Clearance, at its discretion if considered necessary for any activities or circumstances.

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, our Child Safety Code of Conduct, and our School Values. 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 about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether a person is suitable to volunteer at Mirriposa Primary School. Mirriposa 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.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Mirriposa 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.

All volunteers that will be volunteering on-site are required to do an Occupational Health and Safety Induction. 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 while engaging in schoolwork.

Property damage

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property while carrying out schoolwork, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the DET's Legal Division.

Public liability insurance

DET's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in schoolwork 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

- Visitors Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION

This policy was last updated in 2023 and is scheduled for review in 2026 part of the school's three-year review cycle for this policy or if guidelines change.

School Council approval is not required for this policy.