



VOLUNTEERS POLICY (2019 – 2023)

Rationale:

Volunteers add significantly to the human resources available to the school, and consequently they deserve encouragement, effective management, support and recognition

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFE

Morang South Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Morang South Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Morang South Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Morang South Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Morang South Primary School ensures that our key governance documents – philosophy, vision and mission statements, as well as relevant policies and procedures around student safety and wellbeing, capture the zero tolerance message of the child safe standards.

Definitions:

[The definitions below are based on the relevant legislation, and must not be amended]

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 (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

Aim:

- To outline the processes that Morang South 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.
- 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:

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

Morang South Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Morang South Primary School recognises that volunteers make significant contributions to the school community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Volunteers' interests and abilities can complement school programs and provide a wide range of interactions and experiences to support student engagement in school and learning.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Morang South 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 speak to the office staff or classroom teachers. Volunteers are actively encouraged to partake in school activities, and at times will be invited to do so, including volunteering at school camps. The school will seek to provide a variety of opportunities for volunteer participation, particularly opportunities for parents and grandparents. Morang South Primary School values all volunteers that assist with classroom programs, sports events, camps, excursions, specialist classes, school concerts/other events and programs. Volunteers may be sought formally through the newsletter, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.

Volunteers are required to carry out tasks in a manner consistent with school expectations, including maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential approach. They must be aware of the importance of environments that are supportive of all children's emotional, psychological and physical safety. Volunteers 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 as required during their time working in the school.

Individual or groups of volunteers will be thanked at appropriate times in the newsletter, publicising their contributions to the school. A morning tea will be provided in Term 4 to thank volunteers for their contributions throughout the year.

Working with students

To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the Working With Children Act 2005 (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Morang South Primary school is required to undertake suitability checks which include a Working With Children Check, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks. School Council requires

volunteers assisting with any school program to have a working with children check prior to their participation and to present the WWC for verification to office staff.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Morang South Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the 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 Check 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
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member 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. 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, as well as other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Morang South Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Check/proof of ID and may include references or work history.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of school council will be asked to provide a valid WWC Check. Whilst we acknowledge that these volunteers will not be engaging in child-related work as part of their role, we believe that it is important that our volunteers who are involved in making important decisions about our school which will have an impact on students do have a valid WWC Check.

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
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Reporting Obligations
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Volunteers 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 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 Morang South Primary School.

Morang South 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. Volunteers will not be required to carry out tasks with which they are uncomfortable.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Morang South 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. Volunteers must report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal.

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.

FURTHER INFORMATION and resources

- School Policy and Advisory Guide - <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>
- Child Safety Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Reporting Obligations
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Engagement, Well Being and Inclusion Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

Evaluation:

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

Date Implemented	26/03/2019
Author	DET Template Assistant Principal/Principal
Approval Required By School Council	School Council
Date Reviewed	26/03/2019
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
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References	Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide DET Policy Templates