

## 1. Definitions

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 Closely related family member - parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carers mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.
- 1.3 CPS – Coatesville Primary School
- 1.4 DET – Department of Education and Training
- 1.5 School work – School work means:
  - 1.5.1 Carrying out the functions of a school council;
  - 1.5.2 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;
  - 1.5.3 Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council;
  - 1.5.4 Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten; and/or
  - 1.5.5 Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support.
- 1.6 Volunteer work – A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward. 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.
- 1.7 WWCC – Working with Children Check

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 To outline the processes that CPS will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer within our school and for extra curricular activities run by CPS.

## 4. Policy

- 4.1 CPS is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children, our staff and volunteers. CPS recognises the importance and valuable contribution that volunteers provide to the school community and the work they do.

- 4.2 The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that CPS's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

### **Becoming a volunteer**

- 4.3 Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to use the following methods:
- 4.3.1 Contact your child/ren's classroom teacher
  - 4.3.2 Contact the school office

### **COVID-19 vaccination information**

- 4.4 Our school follows DET policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school site and COVID-19 vaccinations. For further information, refer to:
- 4.4.1 [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

### **Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks**

- 4.5 The Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) only sets out the minimum requirements for WWCC's and clearances. The Child Safe Standards is another law relevant to schools that requires appropriate screening measures/suitability checks to be undertaken in relation to volunteers and visitors. CPS chooses to go above the minimum requirements under the Worker Screening Act.

### **Working with students**

- 4.6 CPS values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms with sports events, camps, excursions, school concerts and other events and programs. To ensure we are meeting our legal obligations under the Worker Screening Act and the Child Safe Standards, CPS is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a WWCC, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.
- 4.7 NOTE: It is not an offence under the Worker Screening Act for people to engage in child-related work without a WWCC clearance if they have:
- 4.7.1 applied for the WWCC and the application has not been finally decided or withdrawn; and
  - 4.7.2 the person has not previously been given a WWCC Exclusion under the Worker Screening Act or a corresponding working with children law.
- 4.8 As a result, schools may consider accepting evidence of the application for a WWCC, in place of the WWCC clearance, provided the person provides the school with evidence of the final WWCC clearance when it is finalised. In these circumstances, schools should consider appropriate additional supervision of the volunteer
- 4.9 Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that CPS is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWCC and produce their valid card to the school office for verification in the following circumstances:
- 4.9.1 **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.
  - 4.9.2 **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.

4.9.3 **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

4.9.4 **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not

4.9.5 **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.

4.10 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**

4.11 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, 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.

4.12 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, CPS reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Checks, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

### **Training and induction**

4.13 Under the Child Safe Standards volunteers must have an appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.

4.14 To support us to maintain a child safe environment, before engaging in any work where children are present or reasonable likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Child Safety Induction Pack and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school.

4.15 Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, CPS may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

### **Management and supervision**

4.16 Volunteer workers are expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This includes the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety Policy, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, 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 DET policies relating to Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination, Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying.

4.17 The principal has the discretion to decide about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at CPS.

- 4.18 CPS 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.
- 4.19 All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to CPS'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.
- 4.20 The principal (or their nominee) will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

### **Privacy and information-sharing**

- 4.21 Volunteers must ensure any student information they become aware of in their role as a volunteer is managed sensitively and in accordance with the schools' Privacy Policy and DET policy on Privacy and Information Sharing.
- 4.22 Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:
- 4.22.1 support the student's education, wellbeing and health;
  - 4.22.2 reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors;
  - 4.22.3 make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
  - 4.22.4 provide a safe and secure workplace.
- 4.23 Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the school such as to Victoria Police. For further information on child safety responding and reporting obligations refer to: Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures.

### **Compensation**

#### *Personal injury*

- 4.24 Volunteer workers are covered by the DET's Workers Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

#### *Property damage*

- 4.25 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*

- 4.26 The DET's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:
- 4.26.1 a claim for bodily injury to a third party
  - 4.26.2 damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

## **5. Related policies and resources**

- 5.1 Coatesville Primary School policies:
- 5.1.1 Child Safe Code of Conduct
  - 5.1.2 Child Safe Policy

5.1.3 Statement of Values Policy

5.1.4 Visitors Policy

5.2 Department policies:

5.2.1 Child Safe Standards

5.2.2 Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination

5.2.3 Privacy and Information Sharing

5.2.4 Sexual Harassment

5.2.5 Volunteers in Schools

5.2.6 Volunteer OHS Management

5.2.7 Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors

5.2.8 Workplace Bullying

## **6. Evaluation**

6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 4 years (or as required) as part of the school's review cycle.