

Tyers Primary School - Volunteer Policy

Purpose of this policy

To outline the processes Tyers 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.

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 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.

Implementation

Tyers Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers.

Commencing volunteering

A volunteer cannot commence work at Tyers Primary School until they have a valid and current WWCC issued by the Department of Justice. Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to contact the school office.

Working with students

Tyers Primary School requires all volunteers who assist the school, both on and off-site when students are present to hold a valid and current Working with Children's Check (WWCC).

It is incumbent upon Tyers Primary School to assess and verify the suitability of volunteers who will work with children at our school including requiring all volunteers to provide evidence of their suitability. This evidence is generally a WWCC; however if a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWCC e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

In addition to a WWCC, Tyers Primary School may also consider it necessary that a criminal record check is conducted through the Department of Education and Training. This may occur when possible offences are

relevant to the duties of the volunteer, for example dishonesty offences, which are not part of the WWCC. Tyers Primary School would cover the cost of the criminal record check.

A list of volunteers who hold a valid and current WWCC will be maintained by the Business Manager and provided to all class teachers annually and as updated throughout the year.

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 the Tyers Art Festival or Tyers Music, Food and Wine Festival, during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Tyers Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Check.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of school council will be asked to provide a valid WWC Check. Whilst we acknowledge these volunteers will not be engaging in child-related work as part of their role, even when there is a student sitting on the school council, 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, Child Safety – Statement of Commitment, Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy. 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 Tyers Primary School.

Tyers 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 Tyers Primary School's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Mandatory Reporting Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

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.

Working with Children Check

The WWCC is a minimum checking standard set by the Working with Children Act 2005 for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis.

To be a volunteer at Tyers Primary School a Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:

- valid for 5 years,
- transferable between volunteer organisations,
- free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment,
- Note: WWCC for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

Related School Policies

This policy should be read and understood (but not limited to) in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Working With Children Check Policy
- Camps and Excursion Policy
- Incursion Policy

Review

School Council and staff will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Volunteer Policy and revise the policy tri-annually or as required by completing a policy review.

Volunteer Policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

This policy was and reviewed and updated January 2020