

VOLUNTEER POLICY

*The Currajong School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures, and practices meet all **Child Safe Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359 (2022)***

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that The Currajong 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 school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

School work: School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a School Board member
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the School Board, 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 Board
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- Attending meetings in relation to The Currajong School convened by any organisation which receives financial support for the School

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.

POLICY

The Currajong School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. The Currajong School also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do.

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

(a) Becoming a Volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to make contact via phone call to the office, the school email account or make an appointment to meet the Principal or Assistant Principal at the School.

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

The Currajong School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/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, The Currajong 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.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that The Currajong School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to the administration staff 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

In addition, depending on the nature of the voluntary work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for The Currajong School, 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 The Currajong School e.g.: volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, event 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 or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, The Currajong School 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.

School Board members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Board 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.

(b) 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*, our *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*. Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with The Currajong School policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the school'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 The Currajong School.

The Currajong 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 The Currajong 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. This will be done through formal inductions, meetings and briefings when required.

The Principal or their nominee will determine what supervision, if any, of volunteers is required for the type of work being performed.

(c) Compensation

Personal injury

Volunteer workers are covered by The Currajong School's Workers Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in Schoolwork.

Property damage

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Principal (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances.

Public liability insurance

The Currajong School'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; or
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

(d) COVID19

All individuals including Board Members who choose to volunteer at The Currajong School, will be required to comply with current Department of Education Operation Guidelines.

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Statement of Values, Visitors Policy, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety/Child Safe Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed as per our three-year review cycle or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Approval date:	Approved by:	Next review:
February 2023	School Board	February 2027



The Currajong School acknowledges the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to the Elders past, present and emerging.