

KEPS VOLUNTEERS POLICY

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Kew East 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.

POLICY GUIDELINES

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

Definitions

- **Child-connected work:** work authorised by the school governing authority/provider of a school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present
- **Child-related work:** As defined by the [Worker Screening Act 2020 \(Vic\)](#), child-related work is 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 direct 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 means:**
 - carrying out the functions of a school council;
 - any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, project team and/or school council subcommittee which is approved by School Council 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; and
 - 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 (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.
- Kew East Primary School (KEPS) is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. KEPS also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do.
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- The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that KEPS's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Becoming a Volunteer

- Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to respond to teacher and/or school council requests for assistance, such as excursions, working bees, parent rosters for fundraising events, organising school council fundraising or social events or stand for election to school council, or volunteer to be class representatives.

- Staff will seek volunteers to assist in the classroom or to attend an excursion through Year level information sent to parents.
- Volunteer classroom helpers who assist in literacy activities are required to attend a 'Parent Helpers Program every three years, prior to assisting in the classroom. A school data base will be updated each year and the training expires at the end of three years based on the anniversary date of training. Parents who have expired the three years will be informed in the year of expiry and invited to attend a new training session.

COVID-19 Vaccination Information

- Our school follows DET policy with respect to the requirement relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.
- COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites

Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

Working with students

- KEPS values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms with sports events, Year 5/6 interschool sporting events, excursions, school Soiree, Year 5/6 musical, and F-2 swimming.
- To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, KEPS is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working With Children Check (WWCC) clearance.
- Additional suitability checks may also be required depending on the volunteer role, such as, reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.
- Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that KEPS is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a voluntary WWCC and produce their valid card for verification in the following circumstances outlined in this policy.
- All parent and other volunteer persons, who require a voluntary or employee WWCC will have their card details recorded on a school parent WWCC data base which includes name, card number, expiry date. This data base will be reviewed by office staff termly, to ensure WWCCs have not expired.
- In the following circumstances, a voluntary WWCC valid card will be required to be produced to an office staff member for verification and recording on the school WWCC data base before a parent can be given permission to assist where:
 - **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school are required to have a voluntary WWCC 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 regardless of whether their own child is participating or not; and
 - **Parent/community School Council members** assisting with fundraising activities where parents come into direct contact with students, such as, Mother's and Special Friend's Day and Father's and Special Friend's Day stalls, student disco supervision and any other student fundraising activities where parents are facilitating or taking a leading role of such events endorsed by school council;
- In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask a 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 on the school site, that is not child-related but children may be present. For example, volunteering on the weekend for working bees, fete/carnival and Welcome BBQ.
- Volunteers for this type of work are not required to have a WWCC or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children who are present during these activities also have

their parents present on site. However, Kew East Primary School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, WWCC, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

- School council members, 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 and at the discretion of the school, may require any other checks.

Training and Induction

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

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 be informed of the foreseen risks and child safety requirements in relation to their role. Volunteers will also be required to acknowledge the Child Safety Code of Conduct when they sign in at office.

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

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 the KEPS Child Safety Policy, KEPS 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 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 Kew East Primary School.
- The principal (or their nominee) will determine the level of school staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.

Privacy and information-sharing

- Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of because of their volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the Schools' Privacy Policy and the Department's policy on Privacy and Information Sharing.
- Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:
 - support the student's education, wellbeing and health;
 - reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors;
 - make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
 - provide a safe and secure workplace.

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 Policy and Procedures*.

Records Management

While it is unlikely volunteers will be responsible for any school records during their volunteer work, any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to the Assistant Principal, to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways :

- Available on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included as a link in all invitations to prospective volunteers
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Kew East Primary School policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

- Visitors Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- School values

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as mandated by DET.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	May 2023
Consultation	Leadership: 9 May 2023 School Council: 17 May 2023
Approved by	Principal Helen Fotheringham
Next scheduled review date Area: Management	May 2025