



# Volunteers Policy



## HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Darnum Primary School on 03 5627 8273 or [darnum.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:darnum.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

## PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Darnum 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.

## SCOPE

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:* 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 (i.e., indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer schoolwork in good faith.

## POLICY

Darnum Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Darnum Primary 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 Darnum 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 express their offer of assistance through the school office, where it will be directed to the School Principal.

### **Working with students**

Darnum Primary 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 *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Darnum Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Darnum Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC clearance and produce their valid card to the front office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school 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, fundraising committee, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, event coordination, other groups that meet during times which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

At Darnum Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide [a valid WWC Clearance/proof of ID/references/work history].

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Council will be asked to provide evidence of a valid WWC Clearance. Whilst we acknowledge that 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 Clearance [and/or insert any other checks that you would like to require at your school].

### **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 reasonably 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.

Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Darnum Primary School 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 our Child Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

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 (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.

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 Darnum Primary School.

### **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 front office staff 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 schoolwork.

#### **Property damage**

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out schoolwork, 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 schoolwork 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

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [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](#)

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Darnum Primary School policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Visitors Policy](#)
- [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#)

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
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## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2024
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2026



# Volunteer Confidentiality



Darnum Primary School values, respects and protects the privacy of all members of the school community including students, staff and families.

In undertaking a position of a volunteer at Darnum Primary School, volunteers agree to undertake all reasonable steps required to keep any confidential information secure and inaccessible to any third party. Volunteers agree to not discuss any sensitive or confidential information from the school with any parent or guardian or other third party.

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The information and privacy act 2000 covers the use of personal information regarding students at our school. As a volunteer at Darnum Primary School, I acknowledge that in the course of my work, I may have access to personal confidential information about children and their families.

Examples of confidential information may include, but are not limited to the following:

- awareness of particular students learning levels, grades, assessment results or level of support;
- awareness of particular students' special learning needs;
- awareness of discipline matters relating to specific students;
- awareness of medical conditions or treatments;
- awareness of financial difficulties involving families or students;
- opinions on the teaching, learning strategies or discipline measures employed by a staff member.

If I have any concerns or queries about any behaviours or practices at the school conducted by staff or student, I will not discuss with any parent / guardian or other third party, but will discuss directly with a member of staff, school principal or Department of Education.

I understand that an exception to this would be that should I have a concern that relates to any child protection matter, I should immediately report it to the school principal.

I understand that if the school becomes aware of a breach in this volunteer confidentiality agreement that it may take steps to investigate, and if substantiated, may terminate my status from the particular program in which I am involved at the school.

I understand that the school collects this agreement for its own purpose and undertakes not to disclose the information contained within this document with any third person.

**[SIGN OVERLEAF]**

**VOLUNTEER CONFIDENTIALITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

<b>VOLUNTEER NAME:</b>	
<b>VOLUNTEER ADDRESS:</b>	
<b>VOLUNTEER SIGNATURE:</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	
<b>PRINCIPAL SIGNATURE:</b>	
<b>DATE:</b>	



# Volunteer Child Safety Induction Package



## PURPOSE

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at our school. The purpose of this induction pack is to ensure Darnum Primary School volunteers are familiar with our policies and procedures relating to child safety and understand the important role they play in maintaining and promoting the safety of our students.

Volunteers must read the suite of policies and procedures in the links below before commencing any work where children are likely to be present.

## KEY MESSAGES

- Darnum Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children. We want children attending our school to be safe, happy and respected.
- We are committed to creating inclusive environment where diversity is supported, and students feel safe to bring their whole selves to school.
- Allegations and concerns relating to the safety and wellbeing of our school community will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.
- We are committed to preventing child abuse, identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks.
- Everyone has a role to ensure children are safe – if something does not feel right, speak up. If you have any concerns about any inappropriate behaviours in the school community, you should speak to the Principal. If this would not be appropriate in the circumstances, you can contact the South Eastern Victoria Regional Office of the Department of Education and Training on 1300 338 738.

## INDUCTION MATERIALS – MUST READ

This induction pack contains the following documents that all new volunteers must read and familiarise themselves with. If you would prefer a hard copy of this pack, please contact the team in the office who will happily provide you with one.

- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- [PROTECT: Four Critical Actions for Schools – Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse](#)
- [PROTECT: Identify child abuse](#)

## CONTACT

We value your feedback on ways we can continue to improve and strengthen our child safety approach and encourage you to contact email with any comments or questions.