



## Volunteers Policy

### 1. Purpose

Overnewton Anglican Community College (the College) will establish processes to engage, screen, supervise and manage Volunteers to provide a child safe environment.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all people who volunteer at the College.

### 3. Definitions

**Child-Connected Work:** Work authorised by the schools governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

**Child-Related Work:** Work that usually involves (or is likely to involve) direct contact with a child (including oral, written or electronic communication as well as face to face and physical contact) that is a central part of that person's duties. Child related work may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary). It does not include work that involves only occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to that person's work.

**Closely Related Family Member:** Includes parent, carer, stepparent, spouse, domestic partner, grandparent, mother and father-in-law, cousin, uncle, aunt, brother, sister, half-sibling, stepsibling, brother, and sister-in-law.

**Personal Information:** Information or an opinion about an individual (or an individual who is reasonably identifiable) whether the information or opinion is true or not, and whether the information or opinion is recorded in a material form or not.

**Reportable Conduct Scheme:** A child safety mechanism introduced as a result of the *Betrayal of Trust Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations*. The Reportable Conduct Scheme complements the Child Safe Standards and other existing child safety measures.

**Volunteer:** A person who voluntarily engages in work at the College without remuneration or reward for the school.

**WWCC:** Working with Children Check is a screening process for assessing or re-assessing people who work with or care for children in Victoria.

Definitions related to the Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359 can be found at: [Child Safety: Definitions](#).



#### **4. Policy**

The College recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community. The school seeks to develop meaningful strategies to engage with parents/carers and the broader school community in order to maximise student learning.

The College takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its policies, procedures, and practices meet the Child Safe Standards as specified in the Ministerial Order No. 1359 or as it may change from time to time.

#### **5. Engagement of Volunteers**

All volunteers who engage in child-related and child-connected work and non-child related work in the school environment must complete the College's, Volunteers' Induction and Training Checklist annually. The Checklist will appropriately screen and assess the suitability of all volunteers and ensure that they comply with any reasonable direction of the Principal, including upholding the school's Child Safety Standards, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The College's Recruitment Procedure acknowledges applications by volunteers and all personal information collected from the volunteer complies with the College's Privacy Policy.

#### **6. Management of Volunteers**

All volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the Principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to agree and follow the College Child Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The College will assess and verify the suitability of volunteers, refer to [Department of Education Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#). The Principal has the discretion to determine the ongoing suitability of a volunteer working at the College and may make a decision at any time as to whether a person is suitable to volunteer at the school.

The College will provide appropriate induction and training for all volunteers annually. The Principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in. Volunteers will be supervised during school hours, at camps and



excursions, however, volunteers are not supervised after school at the Junior Sports Program.

All volunteers will be trained in Child Safety, they will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training annually. Volunteers engaged in child related work receive training and information on child safety that includes:

- [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Responding to Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse](#)
- [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [PROTECT: Four Critical Actions - Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse](#)
- Child Safe Standards Volunteer Training
- Volunteers' Induction and Training Checklist

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

## 7. WWCC Screening Checks

The College values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms and special programs. To ensure that we are meeting Child Safe Standards Ministerial Order 1359 all volunteers must meet The Worker Screening Act 2020 for all child related work and child-connected work.

Depending on the nature of the work the College may ask the volunteer to provide WWCC and other suitability checks which may include proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

## 8. Legislative and Policy Requirements

Considering the College legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that the College is a child safe environment, we require volunteers to obtain a WWCC and produce their valid WWCC card to either the main or school-based receptions for visual check before engaging with any work on campus. All relevant volunteers are also required to email their WWCC details to [familyinvolvement@overnewton.vic.edu.au](mailto:familyinvolvement@overnewton.vic.edu.au) for record keeping purposes.

A 'Volunteers WWCC' is a requirement when volunteering:

- Parent/carer 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.
- Parent/carer volunteers who assist with excursions, camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.



- Parent/carer volunteers who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.

## 9. Non-Child Related Work

On some occasions volunteers may volunteer to do work that is not child related. Such as volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parent group meetings, fete coordination, other fundraising group meetings 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 WWCC or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities.

All working bees volunteers will be inducted in Occupational Health and Safety. [Community Relations Team - Out of hours Safe Work Procedures 2023](#)

The College reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, WWCC and other checks at its discretion, if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

## 10. 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 College Privacy Policy and the Department of Education School's Privacy Policy: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

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;
- 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: the College Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy.

## 11. Records management

Volunteers may have access to sensitive information during their time volunteering for the College, any school records that you are responsible for



must be provided to the College Leadership team. All volunteers are required to read and agree to the terms set out in the Privacy Acknowledgment & Undertaking Agreement.

## **12. Becoming a volunteer**

Families and Carers contribute to The Family Involvement Program once their child commences at the College. The volunteering program is an important commitment and a unique concept at the College. The Family Involvement Program is part of what makes the College such a unified community of students, staff and parents.

## **13. Communication of this Policy**

This policy is available on the College website and will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Included in induction processes; and will be
- Made available in hard copy from school administration office upon request.

## **14. Related Policies**

This Volunteers Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related College policies, procedures, and codes. These include the College:

- Privacy Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy
- Responding to Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse Policy
- Dispute Resolutions Policy for Parents/Carers and Students
- Community Code of Conduct
- Taking Responsibility Policy
- Family Involvement Program Policy
- Volunteers' Induction and Training Checklist
- Staff and Volunteers Equal Opportunity and Respectful Workplace Policy
- Privacy Acknowledgment & Undertaking Agreement.

Ministerial Order No. 1359 [Ministerial Order](#)

The Worker Screening Act 2020 [Worker Screening Act 2020](#)



## 15. Policy Review

The Risk and Compliance Coordinator is responsible for reviewing and updating the Volunteers Policy every two years. The review will include input from the Head of Community Relations and final approval of the policy will be made by the Risk Management Committee.

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