

## BRIGHTON BEACH PRIMARY SCHOOL



# VOLUNTEERS POLICY

## PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Brighton Beach Primary School (BBPS) 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:* 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.

## **POLICY**

BBPS is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. BBPS 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 BBPS' volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

### **Becoming a volunteer**

BBPS will call for members of our school community to volunteer for various opportunities via our communication platforms. This includes, and is not limited to, Compass posts, Level Team curriculum updates, Excursion notices, whole school newsletters.

### **COVID-19 vaccination information**

Under the directions issued by the Victorian Chief Health Officer, visitors attending school to work are required to be vaccinated or provide evidence that they are medically exempted. Our school is required to collect, record and hold vaccination information from relevant visitors to ensure they meet these requirements.

Department policy also requires the school to ensure parents and carers and other adult visitors are vaccinated or medically exempted before entering school buildings and when attending outdoor gatherings and events.

Exceptions include:

- When attending to administer medical treatment to their own child
- When attending to collect an unwell child
- When attending for a momentary period that does not include any sustained contact with staff or students, of example, collecting school work or something from the Administration Office.

Proof of vaccination can be checked by a COVID-19 digital certificate or printed copy of a digital certificate or immunisation history statement.

For further information on this process, refer to the BBPS COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination – Information Collection and Recording Procedures.

For Department policy on COVID-19 mandatory vaccinations for visitors, including advice on the type of information that schools are required to collect, record and hold, refer to:

- [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

### **Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks**

#### ***Working with students***

BBPS values the many volunteers that assist across the school, both at a classroom and whole school level. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, BBPS is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working With Children Check (WWCC), proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that BBPS is a child safe environment, we require all volunteers to obtain a WWCC and produce their valid card to a member of staff at the Administration Office for verification. A copy of the WWCC will be taken and stored securely by permitted staff members.

This includes:

- **Parent/family volunteers** who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is **not** participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity. All parent / family volunteers who assist in the classroom are required to complete our Parent Helper Training session as part of their induction.
- **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. Examples include, but are not limited to: interschool sport team management, driving students to small group excursions, parent helpers at sport carnivals and Parent Association student events such as the Halloween Disco.
- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school are required to have a WWCC if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.

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 directly child-related. For example, working bees, Parent Association coordination and event facilitation, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fundraising or school event groups such as Grade 6 Graduation, Parent Association helper roles such as lost property or second-hand uniform.

At BBPS, volunteers for this type of work are also required to have a WWCC or other suitability checks as children may be present for some of these activities and have some degree of contact with the volunteer.

### **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 Code of Conduct and our Statement of 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 BBPS.

BBPS 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. This might include induction in relation to OH&S, Child Safety Policy, including Code of Conduct, and Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy.

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.

### **COMMUNICATION**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Shared annually with school community via newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

### **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

*Statement of Values and Philosophy*

*Visitors Policy*

*COVID-19 Mandatory Vaccination – Information Collection and Recording Procedures*

*Child Safety Policy*

*Child Safety Code of Conduct*

*Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy*

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Policy last reviewed	2022
Consultation	School Council, Feb 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2024