

INTRODUCTION

All staff members of Bairnsdale Secondary College are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children. Our values of Respect, Resilience and Responsibility provide the foundation for this policy.

AIM

To outline the processes that Bairnsdale Secondary College 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 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 (indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

POLICY

Bairnsdale Secondary College is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. The College recognises and values the significant contribution of volunteers. Volunteers shall be treated with respect and engaged in activities that are safe, appropriate and supported by designated staff.

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

IMPLEMENTATION

Becoming a volunteer

- Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1), available from the Administration Office.
- The Principal or College Council may seek volunteers formally through the school newsletter, written invitations or personal approaches, as well as informally through conversations.
- On appointment volunteers will be required to sign the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2).

Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

Working with students

Bairnsdale Secondary College values the many volunteers that assist a range of activities for the College, including our music program, sports events/camps/excursions, student wellbeing support programs and events. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)* and the *Child Safe Standards*, Bairnsdale Secondary College 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 Bairnsdale Secondary College is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the Administration Office 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 Clearance 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 for garden days, participating in sub-committees of school council or other groups/events that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

Document Name: Volunteers Policy SC consultation required. SC consulted on: 22/8/2024	Review Schedule: every 2 years Endorsed by Principal: 16/7/2024	Page 2 of 7
All College policies are available in the Compass Policy Library. This policy is available on the College website.		Uncontrolled version when printed

At Bairnsdale Secondary College, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC Clearance and may be required to undertake suitability checks such as proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

School Council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Council will be asked to provide a valid WWC Clearance. While 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. These volunteers may be also required to undertake suitability checks such as proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference 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 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, Bairnsdale Secondary College 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 *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*, *Child Safety Policy*, *Child Safe Code of Conduct* and *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*.

Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education 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 Bairnsdale Secondary College.

Volunteers should maintain appropriate standards of conduct at all times. This includes speaking style/language, respect for personal space and care with any physical contact.

Volunteers will be required to register at the Administration Office on their arrival.

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
- 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 [BSC Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#).

Document Name: Volunteers Policy SC consultation required. SC consulted on: 22/8/2024	Review Schedule: every 2 years Endorsed by Principal: 16/7/2024	Page 3 of 7
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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 Administration Office 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 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.

RELATED DOCUMENTS / KEY REFERENCES

BSC Documents:

- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

Department of Education 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

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Volunteer Application

To be registered as a volunteer at the College, a Working with Children Clearance (WWC) Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:

- valid for 5 years
- transferable between volunteer organisations
- free of charge for volunteers but cannot be used for paid employment.

Note: WWC Clearances for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

- The WWC Clearance is a minimum checking standard set by the Working with Children Act2005 for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis.
- If you do not have a Working with Children Card, you will need to apply through the WWC website <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> .
- You will need a passport photo for the form, and we will reimburse you the cost of this if you present your receipt to the Administration Office.
- Remember to enter the school name and address on the application form and the Department of Justice will notify us when your card has been processed.
- If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWC Clearance e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

Your Contact Details:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Emergency Contact Details:

Name: _____

Relationship: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Working with Children Clearance [] Yes [] No [] Sighted Card No: _____

Note: A copy of the card must be attached.

Ambulance Subscription: Yes [] No []

APPENDIX 1

Note: In the case of an emergency an ambulance will be contacted and associated expenses the responsibility of individual volunteers. Everyone is encouraged to have an ambulance subscription.

Medical Conditions: Do you have any medical conditions or disability that could impact on your ability to undertake certain tasks. If so, please detail:

Note: All medical and personal information will be treated as confidential.

Permission To Use Photographs & Video:

I _____, AGREE for _____ to take, use, & distribute photographs, in order to promote volunteering or the organisation. I allow such use.

Signed: _____

What days and times would you like to volunteer?

	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI
AM					
PM					

Signature _____

Date _____

Office Use Only

Date Received: / /	<input type="checkbox"/> Entered into Database
Area of Volunteering:	
Approved by Principal/Business Manager	

This application applies to the current calendar year.

To be registered as a Volunteer this application must be completed annually



Volunteer Agreement

As a volunteer at BAIRNSDALE SECONDARY COLLEGE, I agree to:

1. Work as a volunteer in the area/s of
2. Discuss any concerns in relation to college matters with a member of the Principal team.
3. Keep all College related matters confidential and under no circumstances approach parents or community members in relation to issues arising at the college. I understand this is the responsibility of the Principal.
4. Abide by the terms and conditions detailed in the volunteer policy which include a Working with Children Clearance.

As a Volunteer

- I have participated in an induction program and I understand my responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting, occupational health safety & welfare procedures, duty of care to students and confidentiality. I have also received training specific to my area of volunteer work.
- I understand that if I breach any of the above agreements my services as a volunteer may be terminated.

VOLUNTEER

Signed.....

Name..... Date

PRINCIPAL

Signed.....

Name..... Date