

CHELSEA PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN POLICY

DEFINITION:

A volunteer school worker is a person who without payment or reward voluntarily:

- engages in, but is not limited to:
- activities for the wellbeing of the school at the request of the Principal or School Council
- school work.

RATIONALE:

The success of many activities for Chelsea Primary School students, inclusive of the Classroom Helpers program, excursions and school camps, is dependent upon the assistance of volunteer parents and carers. The interests and abilities of volunteers add significantly to the human resources available to our school, therefore providing our students with a wider range of interactions, opportunities and experiences for students.

In line with the Working with Children Act 2005, Chelsea Primary School requires all persons who volunteer their time and are in contact with students to have a Working with Children Check (WWC). A WWC check is required when the activity requires or could reasonably afford the opportunity for a volunteer to have contact with students individually. E.g. excursions, camps, classroom helpers, swimming, gardening etc. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWC check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption. Employees of the Department of Education and Training (DET) and local school-based employees are not included in this policy.

AIMS

Chelsea Primary School aims to:

- To maintain the safety and high standards of care and responsibility to all students and members of the Chelsea Primary School community
- To ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of all members of the Chelsea Primary School community is maintained.

IMPLEMENTATION:

To be a volunteer at Chelsea Primary School a Working with Children Card provided by the Department of Justice is required. This card is:

- Valid for 5 years
- Transferrable between volunteer organisations
- Free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

A volunteer can commence work with Chelsea Primary School when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a Working with Children Check with the Department of Justice.

The role of school is to:

- Ensure a register of all volunteers is maintained in the Administration Office:

- The register will include photocopied WWC cards for all volunteers, along with receipts where volunteers have applied for a Working with Children Check, but are awaiting a WWC card.
- Ensure all applications for excursions and school camps are only approved upon confirmation that any volunteers involved in the activity have been submitted.
- Ensure a staff member supervises (directly or indirectly) a volunteer in each of the areas he/she works.
- Ensure all volunteers have signed into the school and wear the appropriate badge.
- Ensure volunteers are provided with information specific to: Privacy and confidentiality, and the nature of the activity and the volunteers' involvement.
- Ensure volunteers adhere to Chelsea Primary School's Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) procedures at all times.
- Notify the volunteer as early as possible if there is a change to the agreed activity and/or time.

The role of volunteer is to:

- Ensure an application for a WWC Check is completed prior to the commencement of any volunteer work with children.
- Provide a WWC card, email confirmation or receipt to the Administration Office as proof they have applied for a WWC Check with the Department of Justice prior to commencing any volunteer work.
- Liaise with the identified staff member in relation to the area of work being undertaken.
- Sign into the school via the iPad and wear the appropriate badge at all times, and upon leaving, return the badge and sign out of the school via the iPad.
- Adhere to the expectations outlined in training sessions by Chelsea Primary School specific to: privacy and confidentiality, and the outlined nature of the activity and the required involvement.
- Adhere to Chelsea Primary School's Occupational Health and Safety procedures at all times.
- Refer all student concerns or behaviour issues to the supervising teacher.
- Notify the school as early as possible if they are unable to fulfil their volunteer commitment.

When concerns arise about a volunteer, opportunities to remedy a problem or improve an area of concern will be offered wherever possible.

A volunteer's involvement can be cancelled at the Principal's discretion and where the volunteer:

- fails to follow requirements outlined in the Volunteer Policy and elaborated through training sessions and discussion with the supervising teacher
- behaves towards students, parents or staff in a manner deemed inappropriate or improper, or
- continually fails to meet commitments without notice to the school.

When attending an excursion all volunteers to wear a Chelsea Primary School badge.

- If travelling directly to an excursion venue, volunteers will collect badge from supervising teacher.

Resources:

DET School Policy & Advisory Guide.

Working with Children Check <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

This policy was reviewed June 2018 and will be reviewed in June 2020