



Manor Lakes P-12
College

POLICY

Volunteers

Ratified: 10th May 2023



Purpose

To outline the processes that Manor Lakes P-12 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

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

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 school work in good faith.



Policy

Manor Lakes P-12 College is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Manor Lakes P-12 College also recognises the importance of volunteers and the valuable contributions that volunteers provide to our students and wider College community.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Manor Lakes P-12 College's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

Becoming a Volunteer

Volunteers will be invited by College staff to assist at regular or specific times throughout the year, e.g. in the classroom/learning area, excursions/camps, fetes, working bees, stocktakes, Book Club, concerts, sporting and special events, etc

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to contact the College Office on 9741 4202. Volunteers will complete an expression of interest at the beginning of the year/during the year, detailing their availability and preference for the type of volunteer work. Volunteers will be assigned to the classroom/team of their own child/ren unless for an activity across the whole College.

COVID-19 Vaccination Information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.

For further information, refer to:

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

Suitability checks including Working with Children Check/Clearances

Working with students

Manor Lakes P-12 College values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms, with sports events, camps, excursions, fundraising events and other programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Manor Lakes P-12 College is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Check/Clearance. Additional suitability checks may also be required depending on the volunteer role, such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Manor Lakes P-12 College is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check/Clearance and produce their valid card to Office Staff 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, school activities, excursions, camps and similar events involving contact with any children who are not their own.



- **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, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings, 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 WWC Check/Clearances or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Manor Lakes P-12 College reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and WWC Check/Clearance, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

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 reasonable likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Induction Pack and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school. Volunteers do not have the right to discipline or touch children within the College and must report any student discipline matters/concerns to teaching staff immediately, thereby allowing the staff to deal with the matter according to College guidelines.

To further support us in maintaining a child safe environment, Volunteers are not to use personal mobile phones as a means of recording or photographing students. Volunteers are also not to upload images or recordings of students or staff on any internet sites without authorised permission.

Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Manor Lakes P-12 College may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

Volunteers whose preference is to assist in the classroom will also be provided with an opportunity to participate in an information/training session at the commencement of each semester to assist them in developing appropriate knowledge and skills for use when working with children in the various learning environments.



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](#), our [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 (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 Manor Lakes P-12 College.

Privacy and Information Sharing

Volunteers will be expected to maintain confidentiality at all times, i.e. not to discuss any sensitive, personal matters that they witness or hear in the College environment. 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 Business Manager 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 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.

Guidelines for teachers

- Staff will make volunteers feel valued and supported within the College
- Teachers/coordinators will confirm times and programs for volunteers following receiving of the volunteers individual Expression of Interest form.
- To ensure equity for all interested volunteers, independence of children and accountability of staff, regular arrangements within each classroom will not exceed 2 hours per person per day or 10 hours per week
- Within the classroom, teachers will provide meaningful activities for volunteers related to student learning and activity, e.g. hearing reading, assisting with literacy/numeracy/science/craft activities, preparation of team/College resources etc
- Staff will not use volunteer help for their personal benefit of administration, cleaning, making of personal resources etc
- Staff will maintain confidentiality and professionalism at all times and will not divulge confidential student and College information
- Staff will remind and enforce volunteers to not use personal mobile phones to photograph or record students or staff
- Staff will provide volunteers with college devices for the purposes of photographing students with an intended purpose and ensure authorised permission is provided by parents/guardians prior to photographing students
- Staff will ensure no images or recordings of students or staff are uploaded on any internet sites without authorised permission
- Teachers/coordinators will communicate with volunteers, any necessary alterations or flexibility to the existing arrangements as a result of timetable constraints etc.

Communication

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

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions as required
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Related Policies and Resources

Manor Lakes P-12 College policies and resources relevant to this policy include:



- [Statement of Values](#)
- [Visitors Policy](#)
- [Child Safety 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](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

Review cycle and evaluation

Created date	1st August 2022
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Emailed to all School Council members for feedback and review 5th May 2023.- Nil feedback given. Council ratified all policies 10th May 2023- Compass post to all students, guardians and staff requesting feedback sent 26th of May 2023. Posts included PDFs of all policies.- All guardians with Compass App sent push notification of above post 26th of May 2023.- Newsletter notice to Primary families requesting feedback emailed 26th May 2023.- Newsletter notice to Secondary families requesting feedback emailed 26th May 2023.- Seesaw reminder post to Supported families requesting feedback sent 1st June 2023- Community consultation ended 7th June 2023.- Feedback/submissions received - nil.
Endorsed by	Scott Dellar, Principal
Endorsed on	10th May 2023
Next review date	2 years