Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School

# Volunteer Policy

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact (03) 9968 2500.

## PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School 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.

Out of scope are any other volunteers managed by the Royal Children's Hospital that are not engaged with the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital 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, caregiver, 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 schoolwork 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 schoolwork in good faith.

## POLICY

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School recognising the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to support students and the school in the upkeep of classroom materials.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

### Becoming a volunteer

Any perspective volunteer is required to go through the Royal Children's Hospital volunteer recruitment processes in the first instance. Further information regarding these processes is available at Volunteers at the RCH. If deemed suitable by the RCH, then the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School will meet with any potential volunteers to assess suitability to the volunteer needs of the school.

### Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School values the many volunteers that assist in our learning environments including classrooms and at the bedside. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School 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 Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School is a child safe environment, we will require all volunteers, including those involved in non-child related work to obtain a WWC Clearance as per the Royal Children's Hospital volunteer processes, which includes producing their valid card to the Royal Children's Hospital Family Services team for verification and to the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School Business Manager.

## 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 at the Royal Children's Hospital, all volunteers are required to complete child safe standards and aboriginal cultural awareness training available on the Royal Children's Hospital learning management system (Learning Hero) and face to face training. Additionally, volunteers at the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School 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, Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School 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 Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our 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.

Each morning and afternoon session the Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School staff participate workload assessment. This assessment included reviewing where each teacher's student allocation is at and what volunteers are available. Volunteers are then assigned to support students based off the need of the students on the day matched with the volunteer's capability to support the delivery of education.

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 Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School.

## 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; 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 Yalingbu Yirramboi – The Royal Children's Hospital School 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's Workers' Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in schoolwork.

### *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'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.

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
  - 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

- Related Policies:
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - Bullying Prevention Policy
  - Statement of Values and School Philosophy
  - Child Safety Induction Pack
  - Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
  - Child Safety Code of Conduct
  - Visitors Policy

Royal Children's Hospital Policies and procedures:

- Vulnerable Children and Child Safety Policy
- Vulnerable Children – Reportable Conduct
- Volunteers at the RCH
- Your guide to the RCH : Visitor guidelines

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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| Policy last reviewed | February 2026 |
| Consultation | School Council 12/02/2026 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | November 2028 |