

# NOBLE PARK SECONDARY COLLEGE

## Volunteers Policy 2021

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### Child Safe Commitment

- Noble Park Secondary College is committed to child safety.
- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- Our College is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- Our College has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.
- Our College is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
- Noble Park Secondary College is committed to creating safe and inclusive environment for all its students from all backgrounds, cultures, languages, LGBTI, religious and other minority groups.
- We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.
- Further information, our policy, code of conduct and reporting processes are available on our website
- **If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

### PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Noble Park 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-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 (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

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

### Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to approach the staff member in charge of the event or program. The staff member will log any external volunteers attending on the Compass Event. For ongoing programs, the staff member will discuss the proposed volunteer work with a Principal team member. If accepted the following information will need to be completed and handed to the business manager

- Child safe induction – Policy, Code of Conduct, Reporting Obligations



- Copy of WWC and any other ID available
- Volunteer forms with name address, key contact details etc
- Induction handbook (for CRT and Volunteers)

## Suitability checks including Working with Children Checks

### *Working with students*

Noble Park Secondary College values the volunteers that assist the College. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Working With Children Act 2005* (Vic) and the Child Safe Standards, Noble Park Secondary College is required to undertake suitability checks which may include a Working With Children Check, proof of identity, work history involving children and/or reference checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Noble Park Secondary College a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Check and produce their valid card to be photocopied and kept by the Business Manager 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 Check 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. This requirement may be waived if circumstances require it, this must be given in writing by the Principal to the event organiser and kept with the documentation of the excursion.
- **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  
[Note: under the WWC Act, school council members are not required to have a WWC Check. However DET recommends principals, as Executive Officers of School Council, consider recommending that School Council members obtain a WWC Check in circumstances where they will be working alongside student School Council members. This would support compliance with the Child Safe Standards which require schools to implement practices for a child-safe environment, including making appropriate suitability checks (at the discretion of the school) for any work performed by an adult where children are present or reasonably expected to be present.]

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 Working with Children or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, the School reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including proof of identity, Working with Children Checks, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

Council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of school council will be asked to provide a valid WWC Check. Whilst 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 Check.

### **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 Safe Policy our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations. 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 Noble Park Secondary College.

Noble Park Secondary College 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.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Noble Park Secondary College child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

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.

### RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

*NPSC Child Safe Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct*

*NPSC Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations*

### REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last approved by school council on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 and is scheduled for review in Feb 2023

School Council President



Principal

