



Volunteering at Guthrie St Primary School

- **WWCC – Working with Children Check (5 yrs)**
- **GSPS – Volunteer Protocol (annual)**
(form attached)

During the year there are many excursions we require parents to support with supervision. Parents are required to have both a WWCC and sign a GSPS Volunteer Protocol form.

If you feel you would be available to volunteer at any of your child's excursion's, along with having a WWCC (information attached) please complete a Volunteer Protocol form in preparation for any of the following excursions.

- Year 2 - Sleepover
- Years 3-6 Camps
- Major Excursions – all year levels
- Division/Region/State sports, swimming, tennis, netball, football, soccer etc.
- VSSS Melbourne
- Any other excursions/incursions, activities, including walks

Thank you for volunteering.

Brendan Bicknell
Principal

WWC (Working with Children) **Check - Parents / Volunteers**

During excursions such as a major excursion to Melbourne, Bendigo, Ballarat etc. Camps and Sleepovers or any other activity (including walks) you may be asked to supervise a small number of children (5 or less) and consequently we are mandated to ask that you apply for a Working With Children Check (WWC Check.)

The Victorian State Government is committed to a whole government and community approach to safeguarding children in Victoria. As part of this approach, the Victorian Government has introduced a checking system that affects parents/guardians / carers who volunteer to assist with school programs / activities. The WWC Check helps to protect children from sexual or physical harm by checking a person's criminal history for serious sexual, violence or drug offences.

The check is conducted at no cost for volunteers. You can **only** apply on-line for a WWC Check www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au.

You must apply at least 10 days prior to the excursion to be eligible to attend as office staff need to 'Check Status' online for your WWC Check approval prior to a card being issued.

When you lodge your application, Australia Post will verify and issue to you your application receipt to prove you have applied for a WWC Check. While your application is being processed, the Act allows you to commence or continue to perform child related work provided the person's status to work has been approved.

We are directed that if we do not receive a copy of your application, status verified, copy of your card we are unable to allow you to supervise on any excursion.

Office staff will 'Check Status' on-line prior to the excursion. ***Hence you need to apply for a WWC Check 10 days prior to the excursion to be eligible to attend.***

Further information can be obtained by visiting www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au

Thank you for volunteering.

Guthrie St Primary School



GUTHRIE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER PROTOCOLS

INTRODUCTION

Volunteer help both in class and with activities such as excursions, camps, special event days and sporting teams is highly valued at Guthrie Street Primary School (GSPS). We realise that we would be unable to provide quality experiences for the students without the involvement of volunteers. At GSPS we aim to ensure that students benefit from as much help and support as possible, and are provided, at the same time, with the best possible safety and care.

DEFINITION

The term “volunteer” includes parent/guardian helpers as well as other unpaid personnel who assist with the delivery of the school program.

SCOPE

Under this Protocol, individuals wishing to volunteer at GSPS will need to sign the attached agreement acknowledging that they will behave in accordance with the protocols outlined below. The agreement needs to be signed annually.

A signed agreement will be required to volunteer at GSPS for the following activities:

- Excursions
- Camps
- Classroom assistance where it has been requested by the teacher
- Sport coaching
- Other activities as determined by the Principal Class

A signed agreement is not required from volunteers for activities such as:

- Working with the Parent’s Association on activities such as Mother’s and Father’s Day stalls or Hot Dog days
- Helping with morning reading.

Whilst a signed agreement is not required for these activities, volunteers should be mindful that their presence at school sets an example to the students and behaviour should be in accordance with the protocols below.

This protocol has been approved by School Council and will be reviewed annually.

DUTY OF CARE

A duty of care applies while students are under the care of the school. This duty applies equally to school based activities and out of school activities. The same duty of care applies to employees and volunteers who volunteer their services to the school.

Legal Responsibility: Teachers and volunteers are required to supervise students adequately. This requires not only protection from known hazards, but also protection from those that could arise (that is, those that the adult should reasonably have foreseen) and against which preventive measures could be taken.

The health and safety of the whole group is the responsibility of the teacher, but volunteers may be asked to take responsibility for a small group of children. To ensure the level of care is appropriate we encourage volunteers to:

- Count the children whenever they enter a new area and again as they leave it.
- Check and supervise closely children using public toilets.
- Always ensure the children are in full view.
- Raise any concern regarding the risk of an activity immediately with the teacher.
- Sports Coaches: Please do not leave the training venue until all children have been collected by their parents or care givers.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

To ensure the safest possible environment for all students the Department of Education and Training (DET) requires any volunteers involved in supervision of school students to have completed a Working with Children Check. You can only apply on-line at www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au. Volunteers are not required to pay for the check, however a passport sized photo is required, which is free at Australia Post.

CONFIDENTIALITY / SOCIAL MEDIA

The most sensitive issue around volunteers in school is confidentiality.

A high level of trust is essential when working as a volunteer.

Student and teacher information/photos obtained in your role as a volunteer are not to be shared.

This includes verbally sharing information in person or by phone, the uploading of content or comment to social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and any photo sharing apps.) and sharing comment in written or text form.

If you have concern for students' progress, performance or behaviour this should be directed to the teacher.

If any student tells you information of a sensitive nature, please maintain a high level of confidentiality and report your concerns to the teacher or member of the Principal class. The school has a clear policy for dealing with these concerns.

BEHAVIOUR

The students are expected to behave appropriately and it is expected that they treat every volunteer with respect. At times some students will "push the boundaries" with a volunteer. If a little reminder does not elicit an immediate improvement, please refer this behaviour to the teacher. The teacher is the primary source of discipline. Behavioural sanctions or actions should not be actioned by the volunteer. The teacher will determine what course of action is to be followed in line with the Guthrie Street Social and Emotional Wellbeing Manual.

If you are involved in an activity that does not allow you to consult with a teacher regarding a student's behavior (eg weekend sport coach) then it may be appropriate to use a short time-out for a student who is not behaving in a socially acceptable manner. Any time-out should also be reported back to the teacher in charge.

RESPECT FOR THE TEACHER

Respect the guidance of the teacher at all times. The volunteer is not there to confront teachers or make a judgement on the teacher's ability [this is actioned professionally by other professionals]. By commenting to others about the teacher's actions or abilities you are acting unprofessionally and undermining the trust and relationship that a true volunteer-teacher partnership depends on. If you have a concern, address this with the teacher in a respectful and private manner.

ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL POINTS

Ensure you are clear about the expectations of your role and seek clarification if necessary.

You should not put yourself in a position where you are left with a student on your own.

Volunteers are expected to set a good example and be role models to the students.

Volunteers are expected to dress, speak and behave in a professional manner.

Volunteers need to respect every individual student - regardless of their ability, race or sex. Sarcasm, derogatory remarks, bad language or offensive comments have no place in the school program. We must always treat students with respect and without favouritism.

Physical contact or inappropriate familiarity with students is not allowed.

Volunteers must not be under the influence of alcohol or drugs when supporting the school program.

The ***school is a smoke free environment*** so smoking is not permitted on school premises or in sight of the students. On excursions/camps smoking breaks are not allocated and volunteers need to be aware of this prior to agreeing to help.

Medication may only be administered by a teacher.

Many of our school activities operate under tight timelines; it is very important to be punctual.

Please be aware that your presence as a parent helper may affect your child's behaviour. Prepare your child for the experience by explaining in advance that you will be involved to help all the students; the teacher is in charge and you have to do what the teacher has asked you.

FINALLY

If the Principal believes it will not be in the best interests of the school program or activity for a volunteer to be involved, the Principal will decline the offer of help/support.

The Principal will address issues that arise when volunteers do not follow the protocols outlined above. If the infringement is of a serious nature the Principal may decide to withdraw future volunteer opportunities for the person concerned.



GUTHRIE STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER PROTOCOLS - 2021

I have read and understood the attached protocols and agree to adhere to them during any activities in which I am a volunteer during the current calendar year.

My Working with Children Check has been registered at the school office.

Name of Volunteer: _____

Signed: _____ Date: ____/____/20____

Children's Names:

1. _____ Child's Class eg (6CJ) _____

2. _____ Child's Class eg (4CR) _____

3. _____ Child's Class eg (2BM) _____

4. _____ Child's Class eg (NWF) _____

Please return to the school office at least two weeks prior to excursion / camp.