

Becoming a volunteer at Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School

Our Lady of the Way staff and community recognize and value the importance of having volunteers assist at school in a variety of capacities. The children respond to having someone they know working in the school and the teachers enjoy having an extra pair of hands.

In 2016 the Victorian Government introduced Ministerial Order 870 which sets out new standards for schools and other places where children are present, e.g. sports clubs. As a result of these new Victorian Child Safe Standards, schools are now required to undergo more vigorous screening and monitoring of volunteers. Child Safe Standard 4 sets out the practices that we need to go through to reduce the risk of child abuse when engaging new employees, volunteers and contractors.

Under the Child Safe Standards, 'school staff' includes 'an individual working in a school environment who is ... a volunteer'. This means that the checking of referees, work history and so on that applies to the employment of staff in schools, also applies to schools in relation to the engagement of volunteers who are involved in 'child-connected work'.

Under the Child Safe Standards, 'child-connected work' means work authorised by the school principal or governing body and 'performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present'.

'School environment' extends to locations other than the school campus, e.g. school camps, sporting events and excursions. These broad definitions mean that most volunteer activities at a school will be subject to the Child Safe Standards

Therefore, parents helping out at school are considered volunteers and in order to meet the Child Safe Standards, Our Lady of the Way school has initiated actions including; all volunteers having current Working with Children Check (WWCC) and have this recorded at the office, signing in at the office and wearing a lanyard at all times and signing the Our Lady of the Way Community Code of Conduct. All new volunteers will need to complete an Application form to become a volunteer. Parents who are also teachers can supply a current VIT registration card in lieu of a WWCC.

Application Form & Process

The Child Safe Standards require schools to gather, verify and record a person's history of work involving children. Our Lady of the Way School takes child safety very seriously and for this reason, potential volunteers are required to list their work history, including any volunteer work, involving children. Volunteers are also asked to list referees that can speak on behalf of the applicant's suitability to work with children.

Pre-engagement Checks

All volunteers at Our Lady of the Way School are required to apply for and pass a WWCC. If you do not already have a current WWCC, you will be required to obtain this prior to commencing volunteer work and present the WWCC card to the school office as soon as practicable.

Child Safety Policy and Community Code of Conduct

Our Lady of the Way School has developed a Child Safety Policy and related Codes of Conduct. We recognise that child safety and a zero tolerance towards child abuse is the responsibility of all members of our community. These documents, together with the Catholic Education Commission Victoria (CECV) Commitment to Child Safety statement are available to read and download from our school website.

Volunteers are expected to have read these documents and signed the Community Code of Conduct before being able to volunteer at Our Lady of the Way.

Next Steps in Becoming an Our Lady of the Way Volunteer

Information packs including Child Safe Policy, Community Code of Conduct, Application Form and other information can be collected from the office or downloaded from our website.

Volunteers will be provided with an induction to the workplace as a supportive way of introducing the volunteer to Our Lady of the Way School and its ethos, policies and procedures as well as introducing them to their role and work area.

It is an expectation that new volunteers participate in a 'Becoming a Volunteer at Our Lady of the Way' session or meeting with a school representative as part of the induction process.

Steps to Becoming a Volunteer at Our Lady of the Way

1. Gain a Working With Children Check.
2. Sign the Community Code of Conduct.
3. Complete the Volunteer Application Form and process.
4. Attend a 'Becoming a Volunteer at Our Lady of the Way' session or meeting with a school representative as part of the induction process.
5. Sign in and out of the school office.
6. Wear the volunteer lanyard at all times while in the school.
7. Follow the instructions of the supervising teacher/s.

Descriptions of possible Volunteer Roles

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| <p>1. Assisting teachers with school-based tasks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • display set-up • resource preparation • book covering. | <p>2. Supporting literacy and numeracy activities, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one-on-one reading sessions • group reading • mathematics activities. | <p>3. Assisting the physical education teacher by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • setting up and packing away sports equipment • encouraging students to participate in activities that promote fitness and development of sporting ability. |
| <p>4. Assisting in school canteen duties, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general food handling • preparing sandwiches • serving at the counter • selling food and drink items • wiping down counters • washing and putting away utensils • general cleaning duties • restocking shelves with food items for the next session. | <p>5. Assisting school teaching staff in coordinating an excursion by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervising students as required • taking students to/from toilets, drinking fountains etc. • supervising students on bus • praising appropriate behaviour and encouraging modification of inappropriate behaviour • modelling acceptable behaviour and language. | <p>6. Assisting in a wide range of day-to-day school activities, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • photocopying • processing library books • general classroom activities • editing school magazine • typing children's stories • chart making <p>Other duties as directed.</p> |



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Thank you for your understanding, your commitment to child safety and for your support for all that we do at Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School.

If you require further information with regard to child safety at Our Lady of the Way or the application process for becoming a volunteer please do not hesitate to contact me through the school office or via email at admin@ourladywallan.catholic.edu.au

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Terry Cooney". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Terry Cooney
Principal