



## Volunteers Policy

### 1. PURPOSE

The Hamilton and Alexandra College (is committed to providing a caring, supportive and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. The College is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person.

If you are a non-English speaker who needs help to understand this policy, please contact the Business Manager, Mr Jason Bourke 03 55725 1355.

The College welcomes and encourages the involvement of members of our school community and recognises the valuable contribution made by volunteers in providing assistance within our school environment.

The purpose of this policy is to outline:

- the robust child safe processes we follow to assess the suitability of prospective volunteers working with children and young people at our School
- our expectations of volunteers in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management to ensure child safety and wellbeing is a focus and the contribution of volunteers aligns with the College's values, vision and educational objectives
- how we ensure volunteers engaged in child-connected work receive training and information that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep children and students safe appropriate to the nature and responsibilities of their role
- how we support volunteers to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice at our School
- the responsibilities of volunteers engaged in child-connected work towards children and students, information sharing and reporting obligations and record-keeping obligations
- volunteer legal rights.

This policy is publicly available at <https://hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au/about-college/policies/>

This Volunteers Policy should be read together with the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct and all other child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, including our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. It forms part of our obligations to comply with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety in Victoria, including our approach to implementing Ministerial Order 1359, which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises*, Ministerial Order No. 1359 made pursuant to the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic) operative from 1 July 2022. The *Child Safe Standards* are as gazetted by the Minister for Child Protection pursuant to the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic).

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- the screening, recruitment, supervision and management of all volunteers at The College
- all physical and online environments used by students during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the College for student use (for example, sport activities and programs, excursions, camps, interstate and overseas travel) and those provided through third-party providers
- all school staff and volunteers.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions (and are consistent with Victorian law where indicated):

Child	Child means a child or young person who is under the age of 18 years. Source: <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i>
Child abuse	Child abuse includes: a) any act committed against a child involving: 1. a sexual offence 2. grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 b) the infliction, on a child, of: 1. physical violence 2. serious emotional or psychological harm c) the serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence and its effects.  Source: <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i>
Child-connected work	Child-connected work means: a) work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present; or b) for the purposes of a school boarding premises, work authorised by the provider of school boarding premises in a school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present. Source: Ministerial Order 1359
Child-related work	Child-related work means: a) work at or for a service, body or place, or that involves a specified activity; and b) that usually involves direct contact with a child. Educational institutions are specified for the purpose of a). Source: <i>Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)</i>
Child safety	Child safety includes matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse. Source: Ministerial Order 1359

Direct contact	<p>Direct contact in relation to child-related work, means any contact between a person and a child that involves-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical contact; or</li> <li>• face to face contact; or</li> <li>• contact by post or other written communication; or</li> <li>• contact by telephone or other oral communication; or</li> <li>• contact by email or other electronic communication.</li> </ul> <p>Source: <i>Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)</i></p>
Grooming	<p>Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person for sexual activity at a later time.</p> <p>Grooming can include communicating or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.</p> <p>Source: Child Safe Standards Definitions (<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions">https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions</a>)</p>
Information sharing	<p>Information sharing refers to the collection, use and disclosure of personal information either within an organisation or between organisations. Information sharing can occur in many ways including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one organisation disclosing information (the disclosing organisation) to another (the receiving organisation)</li> <li>• multiple organisations combining information in a database and making it available to each other</li> <li>• the reciprocal exchange of information between organisations.</li> </ul> <p>Source: Child Safe Standards Definitions (<a href="https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions">https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions</a>)</p>
School environment	<p>School environment means any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A campus of the school</li> <li>b) Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services)</li> <li>c) Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. camps</li> <li>2. approved homestay accommodation;</li> <li>3. delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or</li> <li>4. sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
School staff	<p>School staff in a non-Government school means an individual working in a school environment who is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority</li> <li>2. a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school governing authority to perform child-related work</li> <li>3. a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school.</li> </ol> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
Student	<p>Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends the school or a student at the school boarding premises.</p> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
Volunteer	<p>Volunteer means a person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the school or school boarding premises in the school environment or school boarding premises environment.</p> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>

Working with Children Check	<p>The Working with Children Check is a screening process for assessing and re-assessing people who work with or care for children in Victoria. It includes consideration of the person's criminal history and relevant professional conduct findings. It is administered by Working with Children Check Victoria and governed by the <i>Worker Screening Act 2020</i> (Vic).</p> <p>Source: <a href="https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/">https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/</a></p>
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## 4. POLICY

### 4.1 How to volunteer

We encourage members of the College community to approach our Finance Assistant Mrs. Ann Sutherland to express their interest in becoming a volunteer.

Volunteers can assist with child-connected work or with other activities that do not involve child-connected work where children are not, or not reasonably expected to be, present.

Examples of volunteering activities that involve child-connected work include (but are not limited to) assisting with excursions, camps, competitions and sporting events, arts and sports programs, reading groups or being a class representative.

Examples of volunteering activities that do not involve child-connected work include (but are not limited to) participating in a working bee or undertaking gardening or maintenance out of school hours, making props or costumes for school plays, coordinating fund raising activities such as fetes or parent and carer social nights; being a parent association or committee member.

For prospective volunteers assisting with activities onsite or involving any child-connected work, we require the completion of our online volunteer training.

A person is not considered a volunteer and no volunteering activities can be commenced unless and until approved by the Business Manager Mr Jason Bourke.

### 4.2 Volunteer suitability

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. At The Hamilton and Alexandra College, the Board and school staff, as well as volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. When seeking to engage volunteers to perform child-connected work, the College will:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance where required under the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic)\* or equivalent background check
- consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer's role and if reasonable and appropriate, collect and record:
  - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - the person's history of working with children
  - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

\*The *Worker Screening Act 2020* establishes a process to screen persons engaging or intending to engage in child-related work through a screening check, and also sets out exemptions from that requirement for some volunteers, parents and others. In relation to child-related work, 'work' includes (but is not limited to) work engaged in under a contract of employment or a contract for services (whether written or unwritten) and [work](#) engaged in as a volunteer. Examples of exemptions from a screening check under the Act include (but are not limited to) people under the age of 18 years; parents volunteering in an activity in which their child is participating or normally participates; and 18 or 19 year old students volunteering in activities organised by their educational institution.

For more information, see: <https://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au/>

As part of its commitment to child safety, irrespective of a person's Working with Children clearance requirements under the *Worker Screening Act 2020*, the College requires all parents, carers and family members assisting with excursions (including sports and swimming programs), camps and other similar activities and those who regularly assist in school activities to obtain a Working with Children clearance and be assessed for suitability whether their own child is participating or not.

Volunteers who are not proposing to engage in child-connected work are not required to have a Working with Children clearance. However, The College reserves the right to undertake suitability checks at its discretion, for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications and proof of identity where considered necessary in the circumstances.

### 4.3 Volunteer requirements

During school hours, all volunteers attending The College premises are required to report to the reception desk located in the campus administration office before engaging in any volunteer activities. Volunteers will be required to sign in using the Passtab and provide details about the volunteer activities being undertaken.

Volunteers engaging in child-connected work (and where required to do so by The College) must provide a valid Working with Children clearance card for verification. An identification card will be provided and must be displayed whilst conducting volunteer activities on the school premises.. At all possible times volunteers engaging in child-connected work are to be accompanied by The College staff and must not be left alone with students. When leaving the school premises, volunteers must report to the administration office to sign out.

All volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of and comply with our Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child and Safety Wellbeing Policy, our Child Safety Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safe Champions.

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Responding and Reporting (including Mandatory Reporting Obligations) Policy and Procedures are all publicly available on our website at <https://hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au/about-college/policies/>.

All volunteers are required to complete an occupational health and safety induction which covers our Emergency Management Procedures and the reporting of any hazards, incidents and injury and, based on the nature of the activities being undertaken, any identified hazards, risks and applicable safe work procedure as relevant.

Additionally, all volunteers engaged to undertake child-connected work must complete an induction and receive training that includes (but is not limited to) information about:

- the Child Safety Code of Conduct and, where relevant to the role, the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- the procedures for managing child abuse complaints and concerns

- awareness of their responsibilities to children and students, information sharing and reporting obligations and record keeping obligations.

Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Volunteers are expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the Principal or their delegate. This includes the requirement to follow the College policies and procedures to the extent that they apply to volunteers.

If a volunteer does not comply with a reasonable direction of the Principal (or their delegate) the volunteer arrangement may be ended and, if on site, required to immediately leave The College premises.

Any inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people by a volunteer or any volunteer deemed to pose a risk of child abuse will be managed swiftly in accordance with our legal obligations and The College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting (including Mandatory Reporting Obligations) Policy and Procedures.

#### 4.4 Induction

All volunteers are required to complete an occupational health and safety induction provided by The College which covers our Emergency Management Procedures. Our Emergency Management Procedures ensure that volunteers who are on school premises should an emergency or practice drill occur are supported and assisted during that process.

Our occupational health and safety induction also includes information about the reporting of any hazards, incidents and injury and, based on the nature of the activities being undertaken, any identified hazards, risks and applicable safe work procedures as relevant.

Volunteers engaged in child-connected work will additionally receive an induction and training provided by The College or the Department of Education and Training regarding child safety and wellbeing appropriate to their roles, including (but not limited to) information about:

- our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- our Child Safety Program
- identifying and raising concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools and their legal obligations with respect to reporting child abuse](#)
- other child safety and wellbeing policies, including our Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedures
- their responsibilities to children and students, including ensuring students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives and implementing inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students
- information sharing and reporting obligations and record-keeping obligations.

#### 4.5 Ongoing training, supervision and management

All volunteers engaged in child-connected work will receive ongoing training and be supervised and managed appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensure that volunteers understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters. Training will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues in order to equip our volunteers with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep students safe.

When determining the type of training and information The College will provide to volunteers, we will consider whether or not it is reasonable and necessary to include training and information (including refresher training on topics previously covered in induction) on (but not limited to):

- our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- guidance on how to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- guidance on how to respond effectively to issue of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm
- guidance on how volunteers can contribute to building culturally safe environments for children and students
- guidance on any obligations volunteers have relating to information sharing and recordkeeping
- guidance on how to identify and manage child safety risks relevant to the role the volunteer will undertake, without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

The Principal (or their delegate) will determine the level of supervision and management required for volunteers depending on the activities being undertaken. The College regularly reviews our practices for the ongoing supervision and people management of volunteers to ensure child safety and wellbeing is a focus. For volunteers involved in child-connected work, supervision and management will be ongoing to ensure their continuing suitability. This will be done by an annual review of volunteers conducted by the staff members supervising the volunteers (eg. Head of Sport reviews volunteer sport coaches).

The Principal (or delegate) at all times has the discretion to determine the ongoing suitability of a volunteer at The College and may make a decision at any time whether a person is suitable to volunteer or to end the volunteer arrangement as appropriate. At all times the primary consideration will be the support and promotion of the safety and wellbeing of our students.

#### 4.6 Volunteer support

All volunteers will be supported to:

- implement our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy to the extent that it is applicable to their role and responsibilities
- reflect child safety wellbeing values in practice.

We will do this by conducting annual Child Safety training and regular reviews by their supervising employee.

#### 4.7 Privacy and information sharing

Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of from undertaking volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with our Privacy Policy.

This policy sets out how The College collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws.

Our Privacy Policy explains that privacy laws allow volunteers to share a child's personal and health information with relevant school staff to enable them to:

- support the education of the student, plan for individual needs and address any barriers to learning
- support the social and emotional wellbeing and health of the student
- fulfil duty of care obligations to the student, other students, staff and visitors
- make reasonable adjustments if the student has a disability, including a medical condition or mental illness
- provide a safe and secure workplace.

#### 4.8 Reporting obligations

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a school staff member to ensure appropriate action.

All volunteers must comply with The College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures which addresses complaints and there are legal obligations on adults, including volunteers, to report child abuse to external authorities such as Victoria Police depending on the type of abuse, the age of the child and, in some cases, based on their job or professional obligations. Failure to report as and when required may be a criminal offence. The College also has obligations to make a '*reportable allegation*' of '*reportable conduct*' involving volunteers to the Commission for Children and Young People.

More information on this is set out in the Child Safety Responding and Reporting (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, which is publicly available at <https://hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au/about-college/policies/>.

#### 4.9 Records management

The College acknowledges that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing.

Any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to the Principal or their nominee to ensure they are managed in accordance with this policy.

#### 4.10 Volunteer legal rights

##### Liability indemnity

Under Victorian law, with some exceptions, volunteers are not liable in any civil proceeding for the personal injuries or death of another person arising from anything done or not done in good faith in providing a service in relation to community work organised by a community organisation.<sup>2</sup>

Volunteers in this context mean individuals who provide a service in relation to community work on a voluntary basis. A person is still a volunteer even if they receive out of pocket expenses incurred in providing the service.<sup>3</sup> Community work includes (but is not limited to) work done or to be done for an educational purpose. Community organisations include body corporates such as The College that organise (including directing and supervising) the doing of community work by volunteers.<sup>4</sup>

In such cases, any liability resulting from the volunteer's act or omission (failure to act) attaches instead to The College.<sup>5</sup>

##### Health and safety

The College has health and safety obligations at law that apply to volunteers.

Under Victorian occupational health and safety laws, employers have obligations to protect the health and safety of their employees and other people who might be affected by the conduct of their businesses. This can include (but is not limited to) volunteers, visitors, customers and suppliers.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 37 *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic). Exceptions are contained in section 38 of that Act and include (but are not limited to) volunteers acting outside the scope of the organized work or contrary to instructions or who are significantly impaired by alcohol or drugs, defamation claims, proceedings brought under the [Transport Accident Act 1986](#) (Vic).

<sup>3</sup> Section 35 *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic).

<sup>4</sup> Section 34 *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic).

<sup>5</sup> Section 37 *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic).



For example, under section 23(1) of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic), an employer must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons other than employees of the employer are not exposed to risks to their health or safety arising from the conduct of the undertaking of the employer.

For more information on Victoria's occupational health and safety laws, see:  
<https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/public-safety>

As part of The College's commitment to the health and safety of our volunteers (amongst other things) we:

- seek to eliminate risks to health and safety so far as is reasonably practicable and, if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate risks to health and safety, to reduce those risks so far as is reasonably practicable
- undertake the same process of risk assessment and management of the activities of our volunteers as we do for our employees
- provide an OHS induction which covers our Emergency Management Procedures and the reporting of any hazards, incidents and injury and, based on the nature of the activities being undertaken, any identified hazards, risks and applicable safe work procedure as relevant
- provide volunteers with appropriate training and protective personal equipment based on the nature of the activities being undertaken
- provide volunteers with a nominated supervisor as their main contact point for any OHS related guidance, queries and feedback.

Where people are on premises occupied by The College, including volunteers, The College has obligations to take such care as in all the circumstances of the case is reasonable to see that any person on the premises will not be injured or damaged by reason of the state of the premises or of things done or omitted to be done in relation to the state of the premises.<sup>6</sup>

The College volunteers also have rights under Victorian law if they suffer injury, loss and damage due to negligence in accordance with common law (court made law) and the *Wrongs Act 1958*. Generally, negligence means there has been a failure to exercise reasonable care to protect another person from harm in a situation where the law requires that reasonable care is to be taken.

### Property damage

At the discretion of the Principal and where reasonable in the circumstances, The College may pay a reasonable amount to compensate a volunteer for damage to their personal property whilst engaging in volunteer activities for The College.

### Insurance claims

Volunteers who suffer personal injury whilst engaging in volunteer activities for The College may be entitled to claim compensation for lump sum and/or weekly benefits to volunteers, depending on the type of injury under The College's insurance policy. Queries about potential claims should be directed to the Business Manager.

Volunteers working under the Commonwealth Government's Work for the Dole program may be entitled to claim compensation under personal accident insurance and public or product liability cover provided by the Commonwealth government. For more information see: <https://www.dese.gov.au/work-dole>

Volunteers in receipt of other types of Centrelink benefits should contact Services Australia for information for information about potential insurance coverage. For more information see:  
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/centrelink?context=1>

## 5. DOCUMENT COMPLIANCE

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<sup>6</sup> Section 14B *Wrongs Act 1958* (Vic).

## 5.1 Policy breach

All breaches and suspected breaches of this policy and procedures must be reported to the Principal Mr. Michael Horne [principal@hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:principal@hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au) and the Business Manager Mr Jason Bourke [jbourke@hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au](mailto:jbourke@hamiltoncollege.vic.edu.au).

The College staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community who breach this Policy may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

This includes (but is not limited to) the following actions depending on the nature of the relationship and the breach:

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- restriction of duties
- appointment to an alternate role
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of the employment, contract or engagement.

Breaches of this policy and procedures may be reported in accordance with the Complaints and Grievances Policy and the College's Child Safety Risk Register.

## 6. RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION

### 6.1 The Hamilton and Alexandra College policy and procedure linkage

This Volunteers Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related The College policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures
- Emergency Management Procedures
- Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedures
- Working with Children Check Procedure
- Privacy Policy
- Records Management – School Records Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy.

### 6.2 Related legislation

The following legislation, standards and regulations apply and this policy aligns with these mandated requirements:

- Ministerial Order 1359

## 7. REVIEW AND APPROVAL

## 7.1 Review

The College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safety Program. We have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child safety related laws, regulations and standards:

- The Business Manager is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy at least every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident, including seeking input from students, parents and carers and the School community
- we record and analyse all complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to identify causes and systemic failures and inform continuous improvement
- we act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our School community.

## 7.2 Approval

<b>Created date</b>	<b>15/09/2022</b>
<b>Endorsed on</b>	By Executive 24 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>Next review date</b>	September 2024