



How it Works – Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) Volunteers & Visitors to School

Steps and Processes at Macquarie Primary School (MPS)

1. All Volunteers and Visitors must sign in at the school office.
2. WWVP registration number should be provided in the sign in book and cards should be sighted by school office staff.
3. If an exemption exists, it should be noted in the WWVP number column in the sign in book.
4. Once school staff have sighted the WWVP or an exemption has been determined, the volunteer or visitor will be provided with a “Site Inducted Visitor” sticker which they should wear whilst on site.
5. For our regular, ongoing volunteers, MPS will photocopy the WWVP card and keep a file on our “Relief Staff, Volunteers and Visitors Compliance” folder.

Why has the Act come into affect?

The aim of the Act is to strengthen protection for vulnerable people and to reduce the rate of harm (including sexual, physical emotional and financial harm and/or neglect) to vulnerable people and children in the ACT.

What does it mean for school volunteers and visitors?

There will be no change for parents collecting or delivering children, or attending infrequent school events such as sports days, assemblies, concerts etc.

Volunteers and Visitors can continue to support schools in a number of ways without the need to be registered under the Act. Examples of this include: book covering, supporting teachers (but not in classroom) with preparation of learning resources, assistance with notes; photocopies and distribution, Oasis vegetable gardening and P&C and School Board activities.

All Education and Training Directorate school-based staff have been identified as requiring registration. Some staff who are not school based have also been identified for registration.

PLEASE NOTE: There is no fee for volunteers to apply for registration

Who is a volunteer or visitor under the Working with Vulnerable People Act?

The Working with Vulnerable People Act states that a person is “engaged in a *regulated activity*” if they have *contact* with a vulnerable person and an *exemption* does not apply.

Definitions

Regulated activity

- Child education services
- Childcare services

- Child accommodation
- Counselling and support services for children
- Commercial services for children

Contact

Defined as contact that would reasonably be expected AND is not incidental AND is either physical contact OR oral communication OR written communication OR making a decision that affects the vulnerable person.

Exemption

Some parties are exempt to WWVP requirements. The most relevant exemptions are as follows:

- Being under 16 years old
- Engaging in the activity for not more than 3 days in any 4-week period or 7 days in any 12-month period (frequency exemption).

Note: this exemption does not extend to overnight camps for children
a “day” is all or part of a day

- Being engaged in the activity in the same capacity as a student
- Where the visitor is a school student on a work experience placement or doing practical training

Some common scenarios when registration WILL be required:

- The activity involves “contact” with vulnerable people or “contact” can be reasonably expected during the normal course of the activity.
- The volunteer or visitor engages in the activity for more than 3 days in any 4-week period or 7 days in any 12-month period (if the volunteer or visitor engages in the activity at multiple school sites these are all included in this frequency test)
- Commercial services for children e.g.: school photographer.
- School Canteens.
- School Chaplain or Student Support Worker.

Some common scenarios when registration is NOT required:

- A regulated activity is not being provided
- An activity involves no contact with children
- Contact is limited in frequency
- Contact is limited to telephone contact or working with the record of a child
- A person is under 16 years of age
- People delivering and collecting children from school
- People attending (but not organising or assisting in) in frequent school sports days, carnivals, concerts, music events, assemblies etc.
- School Board members conducting Board activities
- Volunteers who provide administrative assistance to teachers or to the school where contact with children is not expected and if it occurs, it is incidental
- Persons who visit in the capacity of police officers or lawyers
- Persons who visit in the capacity of psychologists, counsellors or nurses who are registered health professionals

Some common scenarios when registration MAY be required:

- People organising or assisting with school events and carnivals
- Classroom support

- Library Support
- Music Tutors
- Sports Coaching

What if application has been lodged but card has not yet been issued?

As long as application has been lodged with ORS including providing a named employer, and a decision has not yet been made about their application, the employer can allow the volunteers (or visitor) to engage with children supervised at all times by a person who is registered under the Act. This permission ceases to apply if the application is withdrawn or the person is given negative notice.

Where is further information available?

Office of regulatory Services

Tel.: 6207 3000

Email: ors@act.gov.au

Web: www.ors.act.gov.au/community/working_with_vulnerable_people

Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 is available at:
www.legislation.act.gov.au/a/2011-44/default.asp