



## Volunteer Policy and Procedures Including Child Safety -PP004

### Introduction

Plenty River College (the College) is an independent, specialist senior secondary school and a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) delivering the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and VCE Vocational Major (VM). It provides a safe and inclusive learning environment for young people aged 15-20 years who may have been disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education.

Plenty River College is a school of opportunities in which all students are empowered to achieve their personal best. Our mission is to assist students to develop life and work skills and achieve in their learning by:

- re-engaging them in education;
- fostering their social and emotional development; and
- providing a supportive and safe environment for them

### 1.Purpose

This policy outlines how the College recruits, screens, supervises and manages volunteers to provide a child-safe environment and protect the legal rights of volunteers and comply with Ministerial Order 1359 - Standard 6 – Suitable Staff and Volunteers.

This policy is intended to be made available to volunteers supporting PRC College at the commencement of their role.

### 2.Scope

This policy applies to any individual who wishes to volunteer their time and skills in areas of the College as specified by the Executive Principal. This may include, but is not limited to, classroom support, administration support, fundraising, and assistance with college events, activities, or excursions.

### 3. Definitions

Child-connected work:	Work authorised by the College Board and performed by an adult in a college environment while children/young people are present or reasonably expected to be present.
Child-related work:	As defined by the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic), child-related work is 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 direct 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.



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College work:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carrying out the functions of the College Board,</li> <li>• Any activity carried out for the welfare of the College, by the College Board, any parents club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the College,</li> <li>• Any activity carried out for the welfare of the College at the request of the Executive Principal or College Board,</li> <li>• Aiding with the work of the College.</li> </ul> <p>College work means:</p> <p>This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in college community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (i.e. indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer College work in good faith.</p>
Volunteer:	A volunteer is a person who voluntarily engages in approved college work without payment or reward. Volunteers can be parents, carers, guardians, or members of the broader College or local community.
Working with Children Clearance (WWCC):	Is a process that assists in protecting children from sexual and physical harm by ensuring that people who work with, or care for, them are subject to a screening process

### 4. Policy

#### 4.1 General principles

- Ensure volunteers understand their role and responsibilities and have appropriate training and support from the College staff to enable them to effectively perform activities required of them;
- Ensure all volunteers have a WWCC unless they qualify for an exemption (e.g. Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registered teacher);
- Ensure that volunteers understand and comply with college requirements;
- Ensure the College (and its volunteers) meets the requirements of all relevant legislation, in particular legislation that pertains to matters of workplace safety and child safety;
- Provide volunteers with the Child Safe Code of Conduct and ask them to acknowledge that they understand and will comply with it by signing a form;
- Ensure all volunteers work under the direct instruction of staff they are assigned to support or come under their management;
- Ensure volunteers are directed to the Executive Principal if they do not conform to this policy.



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### **4.2 Volunteering at the College**

Members of the College community who would like to volunteer should contact the Executive Principal. There may be times when the College asks for volunteers when assistance is needed for specific events such a celebration, open day or to provide language support for students.

The Executive Principal will carry out a suitability check in relation to child-connected work and/or a one-off engagement type of activity. Prior to the commencement of any volunteer work, all volunteers must obtain a WWCC card.

The following details are required when applying for a card:

Organisation Details:	Plenty River College
Child-related work field:	46 Educational - non-government schools (all primary, secondary, technical and special schools)
Work type:	Volunteer

The above information ensures the College is linked to the individual volunteer's WWCC registration.

Additional suitability checks are also required depending on the volunteer role, such as references, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

### **4.3 Training and induction**

Under the Child Safe Standards, volunteers must have appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.

Prior to the commencement of any volunteering activities, the College will provide appropriate induction or training programs for volunteers regarding child safety requirements and their role as a volunteer. The training will provide clarity about what is expected and how they can positively contribute to the College. It will cover a range of issues relating to the type of activity and may include confidentiality, records management, privacy, Occupational Health & Safety (OHS), emergency response procedures, Child Safety, and legal liability. In addition, all volunteers are provided with copies of the College's Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

To support the College to maintain a child safe environment volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in the staff handbook and ensure the actions and requirements in this document are followed when volunteering for the College. This must be done before engaging in any work where children/students are present or reasonably likely to be present.



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Volunteers will be provided with specific guidance and training on:

- Acknowledging and appreciating the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students.
- Students from migrant and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQ+), students in out of home care settings and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability
- how to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children's students
- how to identify and manage child safety risks (relevant to their role) without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities
- child safety reporting obligations under the Crimes Act 1958 which include failure to protect, failure to disclose and the grooming offence
- the requirement to advise the Executive Principal (or another member of the leadership team or the College Board) of any concerns the volunteer may have about a person associated with the College where a report under the Reportable Conduct scheme may be necessary
- their obligations to share information and create and maintain records in relation to child safety matters.

The College will base its training program on the [training materials](#) available through the Child Safe Standards website. Depending on the nature and responsibilities of the role, the College may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

The Executive Principal will:

- ensure an induction and training program is delivered to volunteers either as a group or on an individual basis as required
- maintain accurate records of any relevant background, any reviews on volunteer performance, and the work undertaken by the college volunteers.

### 4.3 Management and supervision

Volunteers are expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the Executive Principal (or delegate). Volunteer workers are also expected to act consistently with all other College policies and procedures to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers.



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Volunteers will be subject to the College Visitor policy and must sign in at Reception each time they attend the College to participate in scheduled activities and sign out when they leave.

The Executive Principal will determine the level of college staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of the students.

The Executive Principal has discretion to assess the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether a person is suitable to volunteer at the College.

All staff who supervise/manage volunteers are required to:

- Provide appropriate induction, supervision, support and instruction to volunteers to help them carry out their tasks in the classroom or at the College event or activity,
- Ensure that volunteers do not work unsupervised with students,
- Immediately report any matter of concern relating to volunteers to the Executive Principal,
- Ensure that volunteers do not monitor students in the first aid room,
- Ensure that volunteers do not encourage affection from or dependency in students (including the giving of presents),
- Ensure that volunteers do not have unsupervised contact with students during break times,
- Ensure that volunteers do not display any bullying or inappropriate behaviours towards students or other staff.

### **4.5 Volunteer health and safety**

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, the College is responsible for the health and safety of volunteers while engaged in college volunteer work as authorised by the Executive Principal.

This includes:

- The College will take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the risks to health and safety to which volunteers may be exposed.
- Volunteers will not be expected to take primary responsibility for activities with significant foreseeable risk.
- Volunteers know who to talk to if they have any health and safety concerns and how to report any health and safety incidents and hazards.



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- Volunteers will be assigned to a nominated supervisor for each volunteer activity who is the main contact point for guidance, queries and feedback.
- Activities involving volunteers will be subject to the same process of risk assessment and management undertaken to activities involving employees.
- Volunteers are provided with health and safety procedures, instruction and training (e.g. emergency procedures, location of emergency exits) in keeping with their assignment at the College.

Under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004, volunteers are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the health and safety of anyone who may be affected by their actions or omissions and comply with all College OHS instructions, policies and procedures.

### **4.6 Breach of policy or poor performance**

When concerns arise about a volunteer breaching the relevant College policies or not performing in accordance with agreed expectations, the Executive Principal may prohibit the individual concerned from engaging in further volunteer activity on behalf of the College.

### **4.7 Personal injury insurance**

All volunteers engaged by the College are covered by the College Public Liability Insurance if they suffer personal injury while engaging in college work.

### **4.8 Privacy and information sharing**

Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware during their course of volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the College Privacy Policy.

Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant College staff to:

- Support the student's education, wellbeing and health,
- Reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors,
- Make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability,
- Provide a safe and secure learning environment.

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff or the Executive Principal to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the College such as to Victoria Police.



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### **Related Policies and Procedures**

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Duty of Care Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Child Safety Reporting Obligation Policy



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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Executive Principal	<b>Approver Name &amp; Role:</b>	PRC Board
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<b>Department:</b> Compliance and Governance		School Standards: STD-Care,Safety and Welfare of Students	
		RTO Standards: Guideline 6 – Child Safe Standards.	

### Revision Record:

Date	Version	Revision description
9/06/2025	V2025.V1	Initial Policy
19/03/2026	V2025 V1.1	Minor update: Added the following the section Training and Induction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acknowledging and appreciating the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students.</li> <li>• Students from migrant and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQA+), students in out of home care settings and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability</li> </ul>