



VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Updated August 2009

Volunteers are an integral part of our school. Your participation in the work of our school is greatly appreciated and valued. While the welfare of our students is our highest priority, we want to do everything possible to ensure your involvement in our school is a rewarding experience.

The following introductory information is provided to ensure that we exercise our responsibility for the safety of our students, and to strengthen our partnership with you.

Volunteers who have close contact with students [eg sports coaches, classroom helpers, canteen volunteers and those who assist with excursions, camps or similar activities] will receive training and extra information where necessary [eg specific skills, safe working practices and medical conditions].

Record Keeping

Our school's administrative staff need to know who is in the school at any one time in case of an emergency. You will be required to sign in at the front office, or with the teacher you are helping and sign out on your departure. Volunteer badges are available on request.

Student Behaviour

We expect our students to treat you with respect and courtesy at all times. If students behave inappropriately you should tell them that their behaviour is offensive or inappropriate. If the behaviour persists please seek support from your supervising staff member, the principal or deputy principal.

Privacy & Confidentiality

School must comply with Information Privacy Principles regarding the use and release of information. Any personal information [including names, addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances or situations of any nature] about students, staff and volunteers that you become aware of during your work as a volunteer must not be shared unless it is required by law [eg for reporting cases of suspected child abuse].

All requests for access to files and records should be referred to your supervising teacher. Please refrain from making any comments about the use of individual teaching methodologies or student behaviour management methods.

Conversations with students

Remember that you are acting as a role model to the students who observe you. Your language and topics of conversation should be above reproach.

Being alone with students

You should be within sight of a staff member when working alone with an individual student. Don't shut or lock a door so that you are in a room alone with a student. You will not be required to mind a class in the absence of a teacher.

Toilets

Please feel free to use the staff toilets. Don't enter toilets allocated for student use. You will not be required to assist with toileting of students or with sickroom duties.

First Aid

If a student is injured or ill please advise the supervising teacher or our front office as soon as possible. Our first aid officer or other staff members will provide first aid / comfort to any injured or distressed students and will contact parents if they consider it necessary.

Touching students

Please refrain from unnecessarily touching students unless there is a genuine emergency.

Mandatory Notification of Child Abuse

Under the Children's Protection Act, 1993, as a volunteer you are obliged by law to notify Families SA if you suspect that a child, under the age of 18 years, has been abused or neglected.

Notifying is done by telephoning the Child Abuse Report Line on 131478.

Failure to notify suspected child abuse or neglect is an offence and carries a maximum penalty of a \$2,500 fine.

If you observe someone who works with children [eg a teacher, SSO, sports coach or volunteer] acting in an inappropriate manner, telephone Families SA. Do not question those involved as this could compromise an investigation.

The law does not require that you prove your suspicions, but it does require that you report your suspicions. Consult the principal or assistant principal for advice if you feel the need.

Definitions of Abuse:

Physical abuse is any physical injury inflicted upon a child.

Sexual abuse is any sexual behaviour imposed on a child.

Emotional abuse is a chronic attitude or behaviour towards a child which is detrimental to or impairs the child's emotional and / or physical development.

Neglect refers to any serious omission or commission by a person which jeopardises or impairs the child's physical, intellectual or emotional development.

Further information about Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse appeared in our Newsletter No. 1 as Parent Information Paper Number 1 – The Right to be Safe. Additional information is available on request.

Sexual or Racist Harassment and Bullying

Under the Equal Opportunity Act, 1984, it is unlawful to subject a student, a fellow employee or a volunteer worker to sexual or racist harassment.

The principal or assistant principal will investigate any reports of sexual or racist harassment or bullying. We also have other staff who will maintain confidentiality, listen sympathetically and explain our complaint procedures to you. The staff representatives to contact are the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare staff representative, or one of the members of our Personnel Advisory Committee.

Harassment and bullying consist of acts or behaviours directed against individuals or groups that are experienced as insulting, offensive, demeaning, humiliating or intimidating. It can include belittling comments, ridicule, graffiti, name – calling, put – down jokes, attacks on property, exclusion and physical violence.

Occupational Health Safety and Welfare

Our school is responsible for providing a safe working environment. You are asked to take responsibility for your own health and safety and avoid the possibility of an accident or injury while you are at our school.

Don't be involved in any activity that is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk.
Report all injuries and accidents occurring at school to our administrative staff as soon as possible.
Please familiarise yourself with our emergency evacuation procedures.

Further information is available in the red OHS&W folders located in the staffroom.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in buildings at any time and not in school grounds during school hours.

Policies and Guidelines

DfE policies can be found on the website <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/>. A range of policies and documents concerning the school's operations are available on request.

Insurance

The Volunteers Protection Act, 2001, protects volunteers from being sued for an act or omission done or made in good faith and without recklessness while carrying out volunteer duties. The Department of Education and Children's Services [DfE] manages claims for out-of-pocket expenses arising from personal injury sustained by volunteers in schools.

Further information is available from the principal or the department's Administrative Instructions and Guidelines.

Training

Training in mandatory notification is provided by the South Australian Association of School Parents' Clubs [SAASPC]. Other useful websites include www.parenting.sa.gov.au and www.napcan.org.au

Thankyou

Thank you for your efforts as a volunteer at our school.

Thank you also for taking the time to read this information.

Do not hesitate to speak with the principal or any other members of staff if you have any concerns or require further information.