



## INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of our school. Your participation in the work of the 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 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, e.g. sports coaches, learning volunteers, canteen volunteers, and those who assist on excursions or similar activities are required to have a criminal history check and be familiar with responding to abuse and neglect.

## RECORD KEEPING

The school's administrative staff need to know who is in the school at any one time, especially in terms of emergency, so you may be required to "check in" at the front office or with the supervising teacher, and "check out" on your departure. Volunteer badges are available beside the sign-in book.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOUR

We expect students to treat you with respect and courtesy at all times. If students behave inappropriately, you should tell them that the behaviour is inappropriate. If the behaviour persists, seek help from the supervising teacher or senior staff.

## PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Schools 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 volunteer work must not be shared, unless required by law e.g. relevant for reporting child abuse. Refer all requests for access to files and records to the 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 approach.

## BEING ALONE WITH STUDENTS

You should be within sight of staff when working alone with an individual student. Do not shut or lock a door when 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 use staff toilets and do not enter toilets allocated for student use. You will not be required to assist with the toileting of students, nor with sick room activities.

## FIRST AID

If a student is injured or ill, please advise the supervising teacher or front staff as soon as possible. Our first aid officer or other staff member will provide first aid/comfort to an injured or distressed student, and contact parents if necessary.

## TOUCHING STUDENTS

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

## MANDATORY NOTIFICATION OF CHILD ABUSE

Under the Children's Protection Act, 1993, as a volunteer you are obliged to notify Family and Youth Services (FAYS) if you suspect that a child (under the age of 18) has been abused or neglected. This is done by telephoning the Child Abuse Report Line on 131 478. Failure to notify suspected abuse or neglect is an offence. If you observe someone who works with children e.g. teacher, SSO, sports coach, or volunteer, acting in an inappropriate manner, telephone FAYS. If unsure speak to the principal.

**Definition of abuse:**

Physical - physical abuse is any physical injury inflicted upon a child

Sexual - sexual abuse is any sexual behaviour imposed on a child

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

**SEXUAL AND RACIST HARASSMENT AND BULLYING**

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

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

Harassment and bullying consists of acts or behaviours which are directed against individuals or groups and which 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 AND SAFETY**

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

Special care is needed when lifting heavy objects. Do not be involved in any activity which is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk. Please familiarise yourself with emergency procedures for evacuation, and report all injuries and accidents occurring whilst at school, to the office staff as soon as possible. Further information is available in the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Manual located in the staffroom.

**SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted in buildings on school grounds.

**INSURANCE**

The Volunteers Protection Act, 2001, protects volunteers from being sued for an act or omission done in good faith and without recklessness while carrying out volunteer duties. The department manages claims for out-of-pocket expenses arising from personal injury sustained by volunteers in schools. Further information is available from the principal or department's *Administrative Instructions and Guidelines*.

**POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

A range of policies and documents concerning the school's operations can be found in the staffroom, and on the department's web site <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au>

**TRAINING**

As part of your introduction to volunteering, we have provided you with a handbook on Responding to abuse and neglect. We would also encourage you to participate in an online training. This training is located at the following site. At the end of the training you may print out a certificate and provide the school with a copy.

Thank you for taking time to read this information. Do not hesitate to speak with the principal or another member of senior staff if you have any concerns requiring further information.

