



Principal: Marie Wright

Deputy Principal: Karen Gillespie

Student Wellbeing Leader: Victoria Corbett

VOLUNTEER POLICY

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Definition of Volunteer

A person who undertakes defined activities of their own free will to support educational programs and services of Port Noarlunga Primary School either through direct contact with children and students, student practicum placements or site activities without payment (other than out of pocket expenses).

Recruitment and Selection

The recruitment, selection and screening of volunteers will be undertaken in accordance with anti-discrimination and equal opportunity related legislation, policies and practices.

Volunteers may be recruited either through an interest in specific tasks or through a general interest in volunteering which will then be matched with a set of mutually agreed tasks.

Prior to commencing their voluntary work, all regular volunteers should be interviewed, on an informal basis, to ascertain their suitability for and interest in the tasks that they will be given to undertake and to assess whether the volunteers goals can be achieved within the volunteer program. The interview process also provides the opportunity for any questions the volunteer may have to be answered.

Reference checks may be undertaken by site leaders, if deemed necessary, to confirm work abilities or character attributes.

Criminal History Clearances

The DECD Criminal History and Screening Policy Guidelines identify the groups of volunteers, parents, care givers and others for criminal history screening in consideration of their regular contact with and/or their close proximity to children on a regular basis. At PNPS we follow these guidelines. The Deputy Principal manages the application process, as well as the recording of clearance details on EDSAS. All prospective volunteers will be informed of the reasons for criminal history screening and how this process will impact on the site's volunteer process.

Induction

Site leaders will ensure that volunteers have access to an orientation and induction process which introduces the volunteer to the site environment and identifies any training needs required to successfully perform their tasks and meet legislative obligations. The school's Volunteer Induction Checklist will be used to document this process.

Child Protection

The Children's Protection Act, 1993 requires DECD staff and volunteers to notify the Department for Families and Communities, through the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected. This responsibility is part of the broad duty of care that staff and volunteers have towards the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Volunteers will be required to attend an information session, which explains child protection responsibilities for volunteers. Site leaders are responsible for ensuring that volunteers access this information session. Volunteers will also receive the printed handbook that accompanies the session.

Duty of Care to Students

In order to understand their duty of care obligations in relation to students, volunteers should be aware of site:

- behaviour management and harassment policies
- requirements regarding supervision and confidentiality (both on the site and within the community)
- training specific to their area of work
- expectations regarding personal conduct and interaction with students

Public Sector Code of Ethics

All volunteers must abide by the Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector and be made aware of their obligations.

Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing

The principles and practices as prescribed in the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act, 1986 apply to volunteers. All volunteers will be made aware of DECD and site Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare (OHSW) policies and procedures (including health, hygiene and safe food practices, incident, injury, trauma and illness and medical conditions).

Confidentiality and Privacy

During the course of their volunteering, some volunteers may be given access to private and confidential information. Volunteers will be made aware of their responsibilities in relation to confidentiality, privacy and cultural sensitivity.

Supervision

Site leaders are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised.

The level of supervision of volunteers will vary according to the work performed.

Where a volunteer does not have direct contact with students the level of supervision can be negotiated between the volunteer and the person with responsibility for supervising their work. The volunteer must be made aware that compliance with all relevant guidelines such as the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare requirements is expected.

Where a volunteer does work directly with children and students the supervision requirements are the same as the above but with the additional requirement that the volunteer must be visible to a staff member at all times.

Where a volunteer assists with transport of children or students, site leaders will ensure that the volunteer has a current drivers licence, insurance (including compulsory third party bodily injury) and that the vehicle is registered. Site leaders must also be mindful of requirements such as parental consent and ensuring that groups of students rather than individuals travel with a volunteer.

Record Keeping

The school will maintain accurate volunteer management records. The following information will be recorded:

- full contact details for the volunteer (full name, address, date of birth and emergency contact information).
- selection/screening process documentation
- criminal history screening certificate
- confirmation that the volunteer has accessed the child protection information session and received the accompanying handbook RAN certificate)
- a record for each day on which the volunteer is participating at the site (the date and hours of participation). The sign in book will be used for this purpose.

All processes and procedures are as per the DECD 'Volunteers Working in Educational Sites and Settings Policy. Further details can be found in the document.