

SUBIACO PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER POLICY

PURPOSE

To provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers regarding the involvement of volunteers in activities auspiced by the school.

To comply with current legislative requirements in relation to working with children.

RATIONALE

Volunteers provide an important service to the school. They participate in a range of activities including sports coaching, assistance with classroom activities and facilitation of fund raising events. It is important to support the volunteers as well as provide clear guidelines for the conduct of volunteers.

DEFINITION

A volunteer is an adult who offers services for school activities, but receives no remuneration or reward from the school for the services provided. Volunteers may be parents, guardians, relatives of a student or community members.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer includes

A person who does not have a child enrolled at the school and who will be assisting with classroom activities or other school activities

Any person who will be assisting with activities such as excursions, sports training or other school events, where they may be required to take responsibility for a small group of children. This may or may not be under the direct supervision of a teacher.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer does not include the following people/events:

1. Guests who are invited by the classroom teacher to provide a brief presentation on a specific topic
2. Relatives/friends who attend the classroom to observe a particular event such as news time or a student talk.
3. Visitors in the classroom for brief periods of time, during which the teacher is constantly present.

GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

1. All volunteers must ensure that have the permission of the school to undertake activities at the school.
2. Parents of a child currently enrolled at the school are not required to obtain a Working with Children Check
3. Any volunteer, other than a parent, who anticipates having contact with children on 5 or more days in one calendar year must obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing. Providing the receipt for application is acceptable until the card is received.
4. The School does not condone any contact between volunteers and students other than for the approved activity in which the volunteer is participating.
5. Where possible, volunteers should nominate a suitable back up person to conduct their activity in the case of illness or inability to conduct the activity. The replacement volunteer must undertake the same application and screening process as the volunteer.
6. If a volunteer is unable to conduct a planned activity they should notify the school as soon as possible so that an approved replacement can be identified or the activity can be cancelled.

7. Smoking is not permitted under any circumstances on the school premises or whilst conducting school business
8. Volunteers must advise the school as soon as possible of any concerns they have regarding the conduct of their duty or the student with whom they are in contact.
9. All volunteers/helpers should ensure they have read the information sheet for volunteers.

APPLYING TO BE A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers may be used in a range of school activities including sporting, art, music or classroom related activities. Parents of students at the school who are assisting in classroom activities need not apply formally to be a volunteer.

Volunteers will be selected in one of the following ways

1. The School may invite individuals with specific expertise to become a volunteer in an area where that person has skills/interest.
2. The person may apply to the School to become a volunteer undertaking an activity in their area of expertise/interest. This would usually be done by sending a letter of interest to the School Principal.

Any volunteer, other than a parent, who anticipates having contact with children on 5 or more days in one calendar year must obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing. Providing the receipt for application is acceptable until the card is received.

In accordance with the criminal screening policy all volunteers should also complete a Confidential Declaration form prior to undertaking volunteer work. Where volunteer work is ongoing this form should be completed annually. Under some circumstances the Principal may waive this requirement. This would usually be in the case of special guests invited to the school assembly.

INVOLVEMENT IN ACTIVITIES

Under most circumstances, volunteers will undertake activities with a staff member. Activities may only be undertaken without a teaching staff member if:

- The Principal has granted prior approval
- The person has capacity to do so
- The person has the appropriate clearance and
- The volunteer accepts duty of care responsibility.

When undertaking volunteer activities the following considerations must be made

1. All activities are discussed and undertaken with the prior approval of the school principal.
2. All steps should be taken to minimize the risk of harm to others.
3. Activities that could reasonably be anticipated to result in injury to participants should be avoided.
4. Activities must not be undertaken if the volunteer's ability to conduct the activity is impaired for any reason for example, alcohol / drug use or the person does not have the appropriate expertise or skills to conduct the activity.

CLASSROOM ASSISTANCE

Parents are encouraged to be involved at the school and may provide classroom assistance with the prior agreement of the classroom teacher. Under these circumstances it is not necessary for the parent to

complete a sign in/out form. In the event of an emergency situation the parent must follow the instructions of the classroom teacher until such time as the emergency is declared over.

LIABILITY

Volunteers are protected from liability for community work undertaken at the school if these activities are undertaken in accordance with the school guidelines, are within the scope of the school's community work and they are undertaken in good faith. Further, they are protected by the Department's public liability and personal accident insurance arrangements with RiskCover whilst acting as a volunteer.

REFERENCE

Department of Education and Training. Duty of Care for Students. April 2003.
Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 (WA)

Information Sheet for Volunteers

Thank you for your volunteer contribution to the school. Your time and effort is greatly appreciated by staff and students.

All volunteer activities should be undertaken within the guidelines provided by the Department of Education and Training and in consideration of the appropriate duty of care requirements. This information sheet is provided to assist you in understanding how these requirements relate to your role as a volunteer and to provide guidelines for undertaking your activities. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the school administration.

1. Prior to commencing any activity it is important to discuss your ideas, the scope/ role of a volunteer and the school's guidelines for volunteers with the school administration. This will include school regulations, duty of care issues, your expectations and the school's expectations.
2. If you do not have a child enrolled at the school and expect to do volunteer work on more than 5 days per year, you will need to apply for a Working with Children Check. The school can advise on the process for this.
3. Volunteers are not generally expected to take responsibility for supervision/personal care of the students during activities. This is the responsibility of the teaching staff. However, under certain circumstances the volunteer may be asked to assume full responsibility. If the volunteer accepts this responsibility, they are required to provide the full duty of care that would be expected of any reasonable adult.
 - Activities may only be undertaken without the presence of a staff member if the duty of care is explicitly accepted by the parent helper/volunteer.
 - As you will be conducting your activity with a teacher, it is a good idea to meet with them prior to the commencement of your specific activity to discuss your ideas, the scope of the activity, expected outcomes and the management of any problems encountered whilst conducting the activity.
4. Each time you attend the school you must sign in at the front office. Please arrive early so that any last minute changes or issues can be discussed prior to commencement of the activity.
5. If you are unable to attend let the school know as soon as possible so alternative arrangements can be made.
6. Always maintain appropriate conduct, for example suitable clothing, appropriate language and no smoking on school premises or during activities conducted as a volunteer.
7. Once you are involved with a specific activity the following issues should be addressed in full consultation with the teacher.
 - If you are involved in an activity that is ongoing such as sports coach it may be useful to acquaint yourself with the history of the relevant team and/or sport.
 - Be familiar with any rules or requirements for that activity.
 - Meet with the teacher and team/group to explain who you are and what your role is.
 - Explain the process for communication of information such as meeting times, training schedules and timelines.
 - The allocation of positions and captain must be done in consultation with the teacher.
 - The selection process for and during each event should be made clear to the students.
 - Delegate responsibility for bringing and returning relevant equipment.
 - If travel will be involved discuss this with the school and if appropriate parents.

8. If you wish to communicate any information regarding your activity you are welcome to put an article in the school newsletter. A draft can be provided to the School Principal for inclusion.