

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL POLICY

1. Preamble

In accordance with Section 5.6.1 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, a volunteer school worker means a person who without remuneration or reward voluntarily engages in school work namely:

- The carrying out of the functions of the Council of a State School.
- The carrying out of activities for the welfare of a State School by the council or a parents' club association.
- The giving of assistance in the work of a State School.

2. Rationale

Mount Ridley P-12 College recognises the value of volunteers in assisting with the delivery of the curriculum and student services programs. At Mount Ridley P-12 College we recognise that volunteers add significantly to the human resources available to the College and consequently deserve encouragement, effective management, support and recognition.

3. Guiding Principles

Mount Ridley P-12 College is committed to:

- Maximising the number and variety of effective volunteers who contribute to the College.
- Providing volunteers with the support and recognition they deserve.
- Strengthening home-school and community-school partnerships.

4. Implementation

The following guidelines will be adhered to in relation to the application of this policy:

- The Principal or the College Council may seek volunteers formally through the school newsletter, written invitations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversations.
- The Principal or the College Council may terminate any invitation to a person to assist the College as a volunteer school worker.
- A volunteer school worker will at all times comply with any direction or instruction given to him/her by the College Principal.
- Volunteers will be provided with an overview of the College before commencing their volunteer role to assist them in carrying out their tasks in an effective manner. The following areas will be covered:
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Privacy and Confidentiality
 - Anti Discrimination
 - Sexual Harassment
 - Teacher Duty of Care
 - Mandatory Reporting
 - School policy and student management
 - Appropriate behaviour when working with students
 - Volunteer Policy and any relevant codes of practice
- Volunteers are required to carry out tasks in a manner consistent with College expectations/values, including the maintenance of a professional, co-operative and confidential working environment.

- Volunteers should maintain appropriate standards of conduct at all times. This includes speaking style/language, respect for personal space and care with any physical conduct.
- Volunteers will be expected to respect the professional standing and roles of College staff members. College staff members and volunteers will be expected to treat each other with respect.
- Volunteers may be sought to assist with school camps and excursions. College Council requires that volunteers provide a Working with Children Check prior to their participation, in accordance with the *Working With Children Act 2005*.
- Volunteers are not to approach classroom teachers on controversial issues.
- If staff have any issues related to the volunteers program they should be brought to the attention of the relevant Assistant Principal.
- Concerns by staff or parents regarding the work of a volunteer should be raised with the Assistant Principal immediately. Such concerns will be discussed promptly with the volunteer concerned and appropriate action taken.
- Volunteers will be required to sign in at the Main Administration, Early Years or Senior Years Offices on their arrival. Volunteers will be invited to use staff toilets and staff room facilities.
- Neighbourhood Helpers must undertake the Neighbourhood Helpers Program prior to volunteering in classes.
- Volunteer workers undertaking school work on behalf of, and with the approval of, the College Council or Principal are indemnified as to their personal liability in similar terms to teachers.
- A volunteer school worker who suffers injury arising out of or in the course of engaging in any school work is entitled to be paid compensation in accordance with the provisions of the *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013* as if the person was a worker employed by the Department and the personal injury suffered arose out of or in the course of employment with the Department.
- Individuals or groups of volunteers will be acknowledged in staff and College Council meetings.

5. Evaluation

As part of the College review cycle this policy will be reviewed every three years.

Date policy ratified: 16/03/2009

Date of next review: 2012

Date policy ratified: 04/12/2012

Date of next review: 2015

Date policy ratified:

Date of next review: 2018

Volunteers and privacy in the school community

As a volunteer you may occasionally access personal information of students, staff, and others in the school community. There are legislative requirements that prescribe how an individual's personal information can be collected, used and disclosed, stored and accessed. Personal information includes health information.

Personal Information is any information that identifies an individual; it may be enrolment information, health or student progress information. Schools have a responsibility to ensure the personal information they possess is used for the purposes it was collected and is adequately secured.

For example, schools may collect and display student health information in a secured staff room to ensure students receive appropriate care. The information should not be used or disclosed for other purposes. Similarly, schools may take some limited student information off premises when on excursions. Schools are obliged to ensure personal information is secured and used for appropriate purposes.

What do I need to do as a volunteer?

- **Ensure that you have only that personal information required to undertake your role as a volunteer.**
 - Ask yourself, do I need all the available information, or just a part of the available information to undertake my role?
- Ask yourself, is this information relevant to my role or the task I'm going to do?
- **Don't disclose any personal information that you may have accessed in your role as a volunteer.**
 - Only use personal information for the purpose it was disclosed to you in your role as a volunteer.
- **Ensure that personal data is appropriately secured, particularly if it is taken off the school premises, e.g. medical information taken on an excursion.**
 - If emailing personal information off site place the personal information in a word document and password protect the document. Don't include the password in the email!
 - If taking personal information on a laptop or a memory stick out of school, ensure all documents containing personal information are password protected.
- **If in doubt about the handling of personal information, seek advice from staff.**
 - Individuals can complain to the Department of Education and Training or the Victorian Privacy Commissioner if they feel their privacy has been breached.
 - If you have a question or concern about handling of the personal information in the school, speak to the school or call the Privacy Officer at Department of Education and Training on 9637 3601.

Responsible management of personal information is everyone's business.