

VOLUNTEER POLICY

What is volunteering?

Volunteering is defined as an activity whereby individuals choose to work without expectation of remuneration to provide a service with a community focus in a designated volunteer position and of their own free will.

Essentially, people who volunteer do so to help a service, such as a school, sports team or library for personal satisfaction and a desire to pass on important skills to children.

Principals of volunteering

Volunteering:

- Benefits the community and the volunteer
- Respects and promotes the rights, dignity and culture of others
- Is a legitimate way for citizens to participate in the activities of their community
- Enables individuals or groups to address human, environmental and social needs
- Does not threaten the livelihood of paid workers
- Is always a matter of choice

Benefits of Volunteering

Everyone benefits from the volunteering partnership. Students benefit from the support of volunteers who bring their life skills, expertise, knowledge and diversity to a range of learning and wellbeing activities in schools.

DfE has many volunteers who make an important contribution to the achievement and wellbeing of students in South Australian public schools. This contribution is highly valued and recognised.

As a volunteer, you are contributing to both the service and the wider community. You may also benefit personally, such as:

- A sense of belonging and feeling valued
- Personal satisfaction
- Making friends and meeting new people
- Learning new skills or maintaining existing ones
- Improving your health and wellbeing
- A sense of giving back to the community
- A sense of making a difference for students
- Building your confidence

- New experiences and learning skills
- Gaining work experience and employment opportunities

The benefits for the community are also numerous including:

- Diversity and expertise
- Life skills and knowledge
- Ideas and support

Some of the many benefits for school students include:

- Improving self-esteem and self confidence
- Learning real life skills and healthy lifestyle habits
- Learning effective citizenship skills
- Experiencing positive relationships
- Building leadership, communication and planning skills
- Promoting new friendships and having fun

Volunteer engagement

Volunteers must only be engaged to complement the work of paid staff

Volunteers must not be asked to perform tasks:

- They are not trained for
- That put themselves or students in potentially vulnerable or unsafe situations
- Where there is a conflict of interest

Types of roles / volunteer opportunities

There are many ways you can volunteer in education settings. You can:

- Help with reading and writing
- Join the Governing Council or a Sub Committee
- Provide support with camps and excursions'
- Coach sporting teams
- Help in the kitchen garden
- Help in the library
- Help at school events (Sports Day, fetes, Gala Night, Graduation)
- As a guest presenter, share your knowledge and expertise

School obligations to volunteers

As a volunteer you can expect:

- Support with obtaining the Working with Children check and The Responding to abuse and neglect – education and care induction for volunteers
- To be provided with sufficient and appropriate training and site orientation

- Meaningful work, appropriate direction and supervision
- To be provided with a safe and well-managed workplace
- Not to be left unsupervised with students
- To be kept informed of anything that would affect your volunteering role
- No physical, economic, social and cultural barriers to your participation
- To be given a Volunteer Agreement to read and sign
- The school to adhere to confidentiality and privacy principals

Volunteers obligations to the school

As a volunteer you are expected to:

- Ensure students benefit from what you have to share
- Be open to change and ready to learn new skills
- Talk to a nominated staff member about any concerns you have with a student's welfare
- Be reliable and accountable for your actions
- Adhere to confidentiality and privacy principles
- Provide ongoing feedback about your experiences or concerns'
- Respect property, materials and equipment
- Read, sign and adhere to the conditions set out in the Volunteers Agreement

Mandatory Criminal History Screening Process

Before starting in a volunteer role, you will need to complete a Working with Children check through the Department of Human Services (DHS). The application can be completed online, is free for volunteers and is valid for 5 years. You cannot start volunteering until WWCC has been received. Please note that for some volunteer positions, referee checks may be undertaken.

Mandatory Training, Orientation and Induction

Before you commence your volunteering role, you will be required to complete the Responding to abuse and neglect – education and care online training for volunteers. This training is free, contact the school office for more information. The training will cover important areas such as:

*Child protection responsibilities

*Duty of care responsibilities

*Confidentiality requirements

*Professional boundaries

*Work health and safety

*Administrative procedures (sign in / out)

Supervision

Principals are responsible for ensuring that volunteers are appropriately supervised and there is a compliance with all relevant guidelines, such as work health and safety requirements. The level of support will vary according to the role of the volunteer.

If you are working directly with students, you must be visible to a staff member at all times. You must not be left alone in a separate classroom / building, be involved in duties associated with

change rooms, sick rooms or toileting or be sent on a school excursion without a supervising staff member.

If you are asked to transport students using your own private vehicle, then specific approvals must be given by the students' parents / caregiver and the principal. You must have a current drivers licence, insurance, and your vehicle must be registered (which includes comprehensive third party bodily injury.)

Professional boundaries

As a volunteer within DfE, you are expected to maintain professional boundaries with children and young people. You must not exchange personal details such as phone numbers, email addresses, social networking profiles or anything similar.

Confidentiality and privacy

During the course of your volunteering, you may be given access to private and confidential information. The school will ensure all volunteers are made aware of their responsibility in relation to confidentiality, privacy and cultural sensitivity.

Volunteer agreement

You will be provided with a Volunteer Agreement, which you are required to sign. A copy of our schools' Volunteer Agreement is included at the end of this document.

Volunteer Safety and Wellbeing

For the purpose of work health and safety, volunteers have the same rights and responsibilities as staff members. You are also responsible for taking care of both your own health and safety and that of others, e.g. students. You will be required to report all hazards, injuries and accidents that may occur in your presence while you are at the site. Please ask a staff member if you have any questions or concerns regarding work health and safety. Remember, your safety is of utmost importance.

Complaints procedure

Should a dispute arise, it is important that problems are brought to light early and resolved using the correct process and procedures. As a volunteer, you have a right to open and fair access to grievance processes and to be fully informed of your rights. All volunteers have the right to have their grievances heard, respected and dealt with in a professional, efficient and fair manner.

Signing in and out

DfE sites are responsible for maintaining accurate records on each day that volunteers participate at the school as well as a record of which students are working with volunteers. When you arrive or leave the school you must sign in / out of the visitor's book at the front office. On arrival you will be given asked to wear a named and dated Volunteer Label. You must wear this label at all times when volunteering at school.

Student behaviour

Everyone at the school is expected to treat each other with respect and courtesy at all times. As a volunteer you are not expected to tolerate offensive and inappropriate behaviour. If a student is acting inappropriately, please seek the assistance of a staff member who is responsible for behaviour management. Volunteers should not manage behaviour issues.

Privacy and confidentiality

All DfE sites must comply with privacy and confidentiality principles regarding the use and release of information. Volunteers need to be aware that any personal information (including names, addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances or situations) about students, staff and other volunteers that you become aware of during your volunteering must not be shared, unless required by mandated reporting processes. Volunteers also have the right to expect privacy and confidentiality from staff and colleagues.

Smoke-free workplace policy

A reminder that the Smoke Free Workplace Policy prohibits smoking at all government facilities including in school buildings, structures and outdoor areas. This also includes on-site car parks, and therefore you cannot smoke in any vehicle (including private cars) if they are located on-site or being used to transport children or others as part of your volunteering

Version: 2021

Review: 2024



VOLUNTEER'S AGREEMENT

Name: _____

Athelstone School values parents and caregivers who volunteer their services to help our school and students.

Please be aware of the following:

- Volunteers will sign in and out at the front office and wear a named / dated Volunteer Label at all times when at school
- Volunteers will maintain privacy and confidentiality of information about students, staff and parents
- Volunteers will not be alone with any student out of sight of a teacher
- Volunteers will not touch students
- Volunteers will refer all disciplinary issues to a teacher, it is not the Volunteer's role to discipline students
- Volunteers are mandated to notify of Child abuse and neglect and must tell a teacher or school leadership of any concerns
- Volunteers are expected to behave with respect and courtesy to all students, staff and parents
- Volunteers need to be aware of and abide by our Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare policy and make themselves familiar with the schools evacuation and ingress procedures
- Volunteers require a Working With Children Check (WWCC)
- Volunteers are required to complete Responding to Abuse & Neglect training

Please note that failure to comply with this agreement may result in a withdrawal of volunteer services.

Signed _____

Date _____