Becoming a volunteer is a valuable way for parents and friends of the school community to support children with their individual learning needs. Children look forward to working with their helper enjoying the extra assistance and encouragement given. The self-esteem and confidence developed, supports students to be successful in other aspects of their work.

Working with children in school settings requires certain responsibilities and safety precautions. The following notes are designed to help you. If you are unsure about any of the following information, please seek clarification from relevant staff or leadership.

**RECORD KEEPING**

The school’s administrative staff need to know who is in the school at all times. This information is required in an emergency to ensure all people on site are accounted for e.g. a fire. To manage this process all visitors are required to ‘sign in’ and ‘sign out’ at the front office. ‘Visitor’ badges are available beside the sign-in book for you to wear while on site.

**OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, WELFARE 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 the school. Do not be involved in any activity which is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk. Please report all personal injuries and accidents occurring whilst at the school to front office staff as soon as possible.

**PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is paramount that confidentiality, both on-site and within the community be strictly adhered too. Any personal information (including circumstances or situations of any nature, names, addresses, telephone numbers) about students, staff or volunteers that you become aware of during your volunteer work must not be shared, except in the case of mandated notification.

**MANDED NOTIFICATION**

You, as a volunteer at the school, are legally obligated to report when you suspect a child has been abused or neglected. Please read the summary of your responsibilities as a mandated notifier. The Child Abuse Reporting Line is 131 478.

**CUSTODY**

You must not release your student to the care of another. This is the responsibility of the school. Always collect and return your child to their class teacher.

**CONVERSATIONS WITH STUDENTS**

You should be within sight of a member of staff when working alone with an individual student. Do not shut or lock a door so that you are in the room alone with a student. Please use staff toilets (in front office area) and do not enter toilets allocated for students use.
FIRST AID
If a student is ill or injured while in your care, please follow these steps;

- Inform the teacher and ensure the student is taken to the front office if necessary. Any necessary first aid will be administered in the first aid room and / or parents contacted.
- Any injuries must be reported to the front office so that the necessary paper work is filled in.
- If you hurt yourself, the above steps apply.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS
Please check with your student’s class teacher as to any student medical conditions you may need to be aware of.
If you have any pre-existing illnesses or conditions that may affect your work at the worksite, please inform the school, either the front office or leadership staff. This information will be kept confidential.

BEHAVIOUR
Students who misbehave or will not co-operate should be returned to their class teacher who will then decide what action will be taken. We expect students to treat all visitors in our school with the same dignity and respect as is required of them by staff. Do not feel shy about enforcing this.
Children also have the right to be treated with respect and we insist that helpers are mindful of appropriate behaviour, dress and language when working with students. The school is a drug free environment and it is an offence to bring these substances onto school grounds or be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. The school enforces no smoking as part of the Education Department policy.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS
Volunteers are not authorised to take children away from the school grounds. If planning an outing/excursion, this should be done with the child’s teacher and with written consent of the child’s parents or guardians and in the company of others.

USE OF ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES
All electrical appliances on school grounds have been tested and tagged for complying with the standards for safety use. Please do not bring electrical appliances in from home if they have not been ‘tagged’. Equipment that is damaged or unsafe should be taken to the front office for repair or disposal.

POWER TOOLS AND CUTTING INSTRUMENTS
Power tools, stanley knives and other sharp cutting instruments are not to be used.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND
If you are unable to fulfil your volunteer obligations, please ring the school on 8733 2555. We can then inform the class teacher.

SCHOOL FACILITIES
The facilities of the school are available to support your work. Library, computing, video and sports materials are readily available.

STAFF FACILITIES
You are welcome to use the staffroom and help yourself to tea and coffee. Please be aware though that from time to time, confidential matters may be discussed in this area and it would be appropriate for you to excuse yourself during these times.

BELL TIMES
School beings at 8:55am
Recess 10.45–11.15pm
Lunch 12.55–1.35pm  End of day 3.25pm.
MANDATED NOTIFICATION

You, as a volunteer at the school, are legally obliged to report when you suspect, on reasonable grounds, that a child has been injured, abused or neglected. The Child Abuse Reporting Line is 13 14 78. If you have any questions about your role as a mandated notifier, please talk to the principal or counsellor.

REASONABLE GROUNDS
There may be reasonable grounds when:

- A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused
- A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- A relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the child, states that the child has been physically or sexually abused
- Professional observations of the child’s behaviour or development lead you to for a belief that the child has been abused
- Signs of physical or sexual abuse lead to a belief that the child has been abused.

FORMING A BELIEF
The concept of forming a belief is a thinking process, where a person is more likely to accept rather than reject a notion that there is significant harm for the child or young person. You may ask yourself, ‘Am I more likely to believe there is significant harm for the child, or less likely to believe there is significant harm for the child? If you are more likely to believe then you have formed a belief.

It is the Child Protection worker’s job (not yours) to investigate and prove significant harm, so you need only have reasonable grounds for belief.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF A MANDATED NOTIFIER
You are only required to make a notification to Child Protection, when in the course of your volunteer work, you form a belief that a child is in need of protection from physical or sexual abuse.

You must make a report without delay. You are required to make a report each time you become aware of any further grounds for your belief. You do not have to prove that the abuse has occurred.

It is your responsibility to report your belief. It is not the responsibility or your supervisor or principal. In instances where a staff member directs you not to make a report, and you continue to hold belief that child is in need of protection, then you are legally required to make a report to Child Protection.

Mandatory reporting requirements take precedence over our expectations of confidentiality.

IMPORTANT POINTS

- You do not have to prove that abuse has taken place. You only need reasonable grounds for your belief.
- You do not need permission from parents or caregivers to make a notification; nor do they need to be informed that a notification is being made.
• If you make a notification in good faith, you cannot be legally liable.

CONFIDENTIALITY
Your identity as a notifier will remain confidential under the Children and Young Persons Act, unless:

• You choose to inform the child and or family of the notification yourself.
• You consent in writing to your identity being disclosed.
• The court decides it needs this information in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.
• The court decides in the interests of justice, it requires that the evidence be given.

It is not general practice for the Children’s Court to seek information regarding the identity of the notifier.

HOW TO MAKE A NOTIFICATION TO CHILD PROTECTION
Call 13 14 78

Details to supply when making a notification:

• Detail: The student’s name, age and address.
• Harm Indicators: The reason for believing that the injury or behaviour is the result of abuse or neglect.
• Reason: The reason the call is being made at this point in time.
• Safety: Assessment of immediate danger to the child or children (including the whereabouts of the alleged abuser/s)/
• Description: Description of the injury or behaviour observed.

• Child’s Location: The current whereabouts of the child.
• Other Services: Knowledge of other services involved with the family.
• Information: Any other information about the family.
• Cultural Needs: Specific cultural or other details, eg. Interpreter, Aboriginality or disability needs.

A notification should still be made, even if the notifier does not have all the above information.