



WORKING TOGETHER: For Parents/Volunteers and Caregivers

Approved by : St Kieran's School Board

Date to reviewed:
April 2017



Induction Handbook for Volunteers

“Teach Me Your Ways O Lord” (Psalm 86)

This **Code of Conduct** applies to all parents, volunteers and visitors who interact with our schools and Catholic Education in the Diocese of Townsville. It also applies to all parents, volunteers and visitors who are present at school and school sponsored activities/meetings/functions within and outside of school hours. As parents, volunteers and visitors, there is an expectation of support for the Vision and Mission of Catholic Education in St Kieran's.



Table of Contents

Volunteer Code of Conduct	3
Student Protection	5
Student Protection is everyone's business	5
The volunteer's role in the school.....	5
What is child abuse?	5
The legal definition of harm	5
Within a school there are four circumstances where harm can be caused to a student...5	
What are reasonable grounds to suspect harm to a student?.....	6
What is a disclosure of harm?	6
If a student tells you about being harmed or being at risk of harm	6
What happens next?.....	7
Below are some scenarios for your consideration.....	8
Very Important Note.....	8
References and Resources	8
Induction	9
Behaviour Management	9
Privacy and Confidentiality.....	9
Work Health and Safety.....	9
School Facilities / Fire and Evacuation / Lockdown Procedure.....	10
Bomb Threat / Incident, injury or hazard Reporting.....	11
Personal Safety/ Dress Standards for Volunteers.....	11
Dress Standards Suggestions.....	12
Camp / Excursion Requirements.....	12



Volunteer Code of Conduct

Volunteers have a significant role in the work of the school. Volunteers have an integral part to play in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people.

Volunteers are expected to follow the principles of:

- Safety
- Respect
- Support
- Ethical Communication
- Ethical Conduct

Volunteers should think and act safety:

- Put safety first in all activities.
- Follow the safety procedures outlined in the School's Operational Guidelines, to the best of your ability, as outlined in the volunteer induction process.
- If a direct threat is identified, assist in the evacuation of the area and/or situation as quickly as possible.
- Work only according to your level of competency. Contact and report to School Administration when confronted with a situation which you are unable to contend with or is beyond your role and responsibility.

Volunteers should treat students and staff with respect:

- Respect the rights of individuals and maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality.
- Treat everyone with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility.
- Assist in the creation of an environment free of fear, harassment, racism and exploitation.
- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others although you may not always agree.
- Take instruction from and not obstruct the responsible staff member in any way in regards to the execution of their duties.
- Report any illegal activity to the School's Administration or Safe Person.



Volunteers should use communication skills when engaging with students:

- Acknowledge the needs and concerns of the individual.
- Be effective listeners (e.g. ask open questions; be alert to non-verbal communication; stay calm and relaxed).
- Be aware of the young person's physical space.
- Be aware of your own body language.
- Be judicious in making physical contact with young people.
- Stay calm and relaxed.
- Be clear and consistent.
- Use non-discriminatory respectful and non-judgemental language.
- Seek advice whenever appropriate.
- As a volunteer, you must follow all instructions from the staff and School Administration. You should NOT engage directly with media representatives, but refer all enquiries to School Administration.

Volunteers must not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products while on duty (all TCEO schools and colleges are smoke free).
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering.
- Use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time while volunteering.
- Verbally harass or abuse any person or use profanity while volunteering.
- Utilise your position as a volunteer to take advantage of any young person.

Any breach of this Code of Conduct will be dealt with by the School Principal in the first instance.



STUDENT PROTECTION

Student Protection is everyone's business

As adults we all have a responsibility to care for children and young people and to protect them from all forms of harm as well as to positively promote their welfare.

St Kieran's Catholic School seeks to continue its adherence to legislative requirements and duty of care to students by a commitment to the implementation of student protection strategies and procedures.

The volunteer's role in the school

Our aim is to give students the sense of being safe and valued as people so that they are secure and ready to learn at their best level. As a volunteer you play a significant role in the work of the school, form part of the school community and assist in providing the optimal learning environment for the students.

This document outlines your responsibilities as a volunteer in the vital area of student protection and it is important that you read this document, in conjunction with the Volunteer Code of Conduct, so you understand your responsibilities in the protection of our students.

What is child abuse?

The term 'abuse' has been replaced in recent state legislation with the term 'harm'. Child '**abuse**' is any act, or failure to act, that leads to the '**harm**' of a child or young person. It can be better understood by thinking that 'abuse' is the action and 'harm' is the consequence.

The legal definition of 'harm'

Harm is defined legally in the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act and Regulations 2001*, and the *Child protection Act 1999* as:

'Harm caused to the student under 18 years is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student's physical, psychological or emotional well-being. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.'

Within a school there are four circumstances where harm can be caused to a student.

They are:

1. Harm to a student by a staff member or volunteer of the school.
2. Harm to a student by someone outside the school.
3. Harm by other students.
4. Student self-harm.



What are reasonable grounds to suspect harm to a student?

Reasonable grounds to suspect that harm to a student may have occurred is when:

- A student speaks about being harmed or being in danger of being harmed.
- Someone else (perhaps a relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the student) informs you that they suspect a student has been harmed.
- A student tells you that they know a child who has been harmed (often the student is referring to him / herself).
- You observe a particular student's behaviour, physical appearance or social relationships that raises concerns of possible harm to the student.

What is a disclosure of harm?

Sometimes a student may approach you and tell you about their experience of being harmed. This is described as a disclosure.

If a student speaks to you about a concern, you need to be prepared so that you can be supportive of the student and clear about your own responsibility at the same time.

If a student tells you about being harmed or being at risk of harm.

DO:

- Let them tell their experience first in their own words and at their own time.
- Listen attentively to their story.
- React calmly to the information the student provides though it might be upsetting.
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing to tell e.g. "I am pleased you have told me these things."
- Reassure the child that it is not his / her fault that whatever the concern is has occurred.
- **At this stage you may ask for clarification ONLY if it is necessary. If you have the essence of the story, you have enough information to report your concerns.**
- Be thoughtful and careful of the student's feelings at this time. They may be distressed or ashamed, so they will need care and reassurance.
- Be aware of privacy issues for the student.



- Treat this information confidentially and discuss it only with the right person out of the hearing of other students.
 - Make notes if possible – date, time, exact words and any clarifying questions.
- Be honest with the student about your responsibility for taking action.
- Act immediately to report the concerns to the Principal, APRE or Mellissa Anderson (Safe Person for Students).

- **Do not** panic
- **Do not** react emotionally or accuse the alleged perpetrator.
- **Do not** ask leading questions e.g. Was it your father who did this to you?
- **Do not** make promises that you cannot keep – particularly about not telling others (e.g. relevant adults such as the Principal etc.) about the information. Do not promise that everything will be OK.
- **Do not** leave the student alone immediately after a disclosure as they will be feeling very vulnerable at this time.
- **Do not** discuss the situation with parents, caregivers or others (other than those designated e.g. Principal, APRE, Safe Person contact).

Your reporting responsibilities

In any instance where you either become aware, or reasonably suspect harm to a student has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring, you must report this as soon as possible to the Principal, APRE or the school Safe Person contact (SSP).

REMEMBER
Maintaining confidentiality is vital for the protection of all involved.

What happens next?

Once you have reported the alleged harm of a student, the Principal, APRE or the SSP will follow student protection reporting processes in regard to the report. Townsville Catholic Education has student protection reporting processes and all St Kieran's Catholic School staff have received training in student protection. Your report will be taken seriously, dealt with immediately and reported to the appropriate State authorities where necessary.



Below are some scenarios for your consideration.

Scenario 1

You work as a volunteer in the tuckshop. You notice a Year 2 girl has a large bruise around her eye and she tells you that she had been hit by her mother. You know her mother well. What do you do?

Scenario 2

You are a volunteer who assists with helping students to read. Another volunteer is working nearby with a student. You observe that the volunteer appears angry, is raising her voice at the student, poking the student on the shoulder and you observe the volunteer angrily hit the student on the arm. You have worked with this volunteer all year and usually have morning tea with her. What do you do?

Scenario 3

You are a volunteer and assist with the school year 6 netball team. You notice that a female student in the team has cuts on her arms and on her legs. You enquire about the cuts and she tells you she did it to herself because she felt unhappy. You remember someone remarking in the past that this girl was a little 'strange'. What do you do?

Scenario 4

You are a volunteer parent assisting school staff take the Year 6 class on an excursion. On the bus one of the Year 6 girls tells you that one of the boys has been acting in a sexually inappropriate manner at the back of the bus. The male student is the son of a friend with whom you talk with regularly. What do you do?

Answers

In each of the above situations you should be reporting these incidents to the Principal or another delegated APRE or School Safe Person: Mel Anderson.

Very Important Note

If you have been involved in a student protection matter in your role as a school volunteer, be aware of your own reactions and seek support if required. The Principal or APRE can assist you with this issue. Finally, **please sign the following page where indicated to confirm you understand your student protection responsibilities as a volunteer.**

References and Resources

More information on student protection in Townsville Catholic Education can be found in the following document - *Townsville Catholic Education Office Kids Feel Safe Strategy.*



Induction

As a volunteer, you are under the direction of a School staff member (usually a teacher) and must follow their directions at all times for your safety, the safety of others and for the good management of the school and its environment.

Behaviour Management

Behaviour management is an integral part of the relationships within St Kieran's Catholic School. It has the individual as its focus and reflects gospel values enabling all to grow. It must affirm the dignity and worth of each person whilst creating an environment that facilitates the development and experience of responsible self-discipline.

Should you have any concern or issue with a student or group of students, you must immediately refer this matter to the teacher. The teacher will then address the situation within the School's behaviour management policy and procedures. At no time should a parent "discipline" a student.

Privacy and Confidentiality

Every student, family and staff member has the right to have their personal and professional lives and information kept confidential. From time to time as a volunteer you may come across information about a student, a family or staff member. This information must not be shared by you to anyone else.

As you would expect your information to be kept private and confidential, so do other people. Please respect their right to privacy and confidentiality.

Work Health and Safety

Work Health and Safety laws state that the School has a legal obligation for employees, volunteers and visitors and that all workers (including volunteers and visitors) have a legal obligation for themselves, fellow workers and visitors. The School expects all volunteers to behave in a safe manner which will not put themselves or others at risk. The School expects volunteers to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) where provided, and where they have been trained to use it.

Volunteers must –

- Take reasonable care for his or her own health and safety; and
- Take reasonable care that his or her acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and
- Comply, so far as the volunteer is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the Principal to allow the person to comply with this Act; and
- Co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure relating to health or safety at the workplace, including the food safety health plan in the tuckshop or when handling food.
- If you identify any risks or hazards, potential risks or hazards then you must notify the teacher immediately so that the risk or hazard can be effectively reported and addressed.



- Smoking is not permitted in any buildings or grounds.
- Ensure that they are dressed and covered appropriately for the activity that they are doing.

School Facilities

- Toilets for volunteers can be found in the main Administration building.
- Drinking water can be found in the main staffroom or at the student bubblers located around the School at various points.
- A first aid kit and sickbay is located in the Administration building and our office staff hold a current first aid certificate should it be necessary.

Fire and Evacuation

The continuous ring of an alarm bell and/or a siren is sounded. Verbal directions to evacuate the campus will also be given. On locating an outbreak, the person must immediately report it to the Office (216, 201). The Office rings the Fire Brigade (000) and informs a member of the Leadership Team.

The following procedures will take place under teacher direction:

- a. On recognition of the alarm (a rising intermittent single note), students stop work.
- b. Close all windows.
- c. The teacher positions himself/herself at the doorway to check that the passage way is clear.
- d. On instruction from the teacher, students file out promptly in an orderly and controlled manner.
- e. Students do not take school bags, hats, etc. with them
- f. After the last student has left, the teacher shuts the door (do not lock) and escorts students to the **assembly area – behind the Prep playground outside the meeting room.**
- g. Specialist teachers take students to assembly area and wait for the classroom teacher.
- h. Students avoid buildings where possible.
- i. Volunteers and all staff, other than the class teachers are to report to the signed area "Volunteers and Staff".

The students, teachers, volunteers and visitors remain in the assembly area until directed otherwise by the Workplace health and safety representative (wearing yellow vest).

Lockdown procedure:

In each classroom and learning space there is a posted flowchart that shows this protocol visually.

- When as a volunteer you identify a dangerous person on site, you are to ring 55* on the phone and speak slowly and clearly over the intercom: *****. This key will be given at your volunteer induction. If outside or in the Brother Walker shed, listen for the lockdown alarm.
- Move out of sight in the learning space you are in. If on the field you are required to retreat into the closest classroom or room on the lower floor. Then you will hear a lock down alarm (a single note, intermittent beep) to confirm this immediate action required.



- Remain there until notified via intercom. If there is no intercom, remain in lock down until a staff member delivers the message.

Bomb Threat

When a call is placed to the school threatening a bomb threat, all people are to evacuate to the emergency assembly area (see sign) and the Principal will notify emergency services. At no time will any person enter the facility until the bomb deactivation squad and the Principal deem it to be safe.

Incident, injury or hazard reporting

If you are injured, no matter how minor, report it immediately to the teacher and/or the Principal. An accident/incident report will be completed, forwarded to the Principal and the Townsville Catholic Education Office.

If you identify any risks or hazards, potential risks or hazards then you must notify the teacher immediately so that the risk or hazard can be effectively reported and addressed.

Appropriate footwear (closed in, appropriate heels, etc.) should be worn for School or class activities.

Personal Safety

- Please do not lift any items that you consider to be too heavy. The teacher will be able to provide appropriate lifting devices (trolley, etc.) if necessary. If you have a pre-existing injury or have suffered a prior lifting injury, please consider the risk of lifting such items at school. If you are going to lift a bulky item ensure that you get in close to the item, knees bent, back straight and lift through the legs keeping the item in close to you. If you are unsure of the lift, please do not lift it and seek assistance from the teacher.
- You are asked to NOT work at heights, from ladders or other elevated work platforms. Volunteers or other workers are NOT permitted to stand on chairs, desks, benches, etc. to work at heights.
- Hot liquids such as tea or coffee are not permitted in classrooms or playgrounds around students at any time.
- The School provides sunscreen to students, staff and parents. Please make use of this if you will be outside in the sun. Staff and students are required to always wear a hat when outside. It would be appreciated if parents were to also follow this rule.
- Appropriate footwear should be worn in the school and classroom.

Dress Standards for Volunteers

Volunteers and community members of St Kieran's Catholic Primary School will wear a standard of dress which reflects their role and their responsibilities to:

- students as role models;
- their public position/role;
- the St Kieran's Catholic Primary School community;
- considerations of modesty;



- the particular role they perform in the school community taking into consideration Workplace Health and Safety requirements.

The School Principal reserves the right to discuss dress standards with individual members or in groups if required.

Dress Standards Suggestions

Volunteers and community members of St Kieran's Catholic Primary School should always consider the task they are to undertake when choosing the outfit they are going to wear to perform their role. Generally speaking:

- Clothing should be temperate in nature and in keeping with the social mores of the area.
- Clothing should in no way be worn to be provocative or illicit a response from the students.
- Clothing should not be tight fitting nor sheer such that underwear is intentionally displayed or visible through the clothing
- Shirts and blouses should be of such a cut that the torso is fully covered and cleavage/chest not exposed.
- Clothing should not display large graphics that could be interpreted as offensive.

Camp / Excursion Requirements

If you are volunteering your time to go on a school camp or a school excursion it is very important that you have or obtain a blue card. If you do not have one, please see the office for a form. If you do not have a card, you will not be able to go away on camp or school excursions.