



## **INTRODUCTION**

Kilparrin staff acknowledge that voluntary workers can make a significant contribution to the school community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Volunteers may have a wide range of interests and abilities that complement school programs.

## **VOLUNTEER SELECTION PROCEDURES**

The Principal (or delegate) will assess volunteers for their suitability to work at Kilparrin. This assessment will be made in relation to the skills and contributions being offered and after verification of the person's good character.

Volunteers will be required to visit Kilparrin and then attend an interview, complete induction training and sign both the *Kilparrin Volunteer Agreement Form* before they commence volunteer work.

Volunteers offering to assist in programs involving students will be asked to provide:

- details of qualifications, experience and other information relevant to the program
- the names of two referees, who may be called upon to verify information provided and attest to the character of the volunteer.

The Principal's decision is final in determining who is eligible to work as a volunteer at Kilparrin. Applicants not accepted for volunteer work will be advised in writing.

## **SEQUENCE OF STEPS FOR VOLUNTEERS**

1. Make informal contact with Kilparrin to ascertain needs re volunteers.
2. Visit Kilparrin for familiarisation.
3. Apply to Kilparrin providing background information and referee details
4. Attend an interview.
5. Attend induction training.
6. Sign the *Volunteer Agreement Form*

## **KILPARRIN'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO VOLUNTEERS**

A staff member will be allocated to supervise a volunteer in the areas where s/he works.

Accurate records will be kept of a volunteer's training and work details.

Volunteers will be provided with induction training that will include:

- mandatory reporting information
- Occupational Health Safety & Welfare procedures
- duty of care responsibilities to students
- confidentiality requirements
- training specific to the area of volunteer work.

Volunteers will be matched with work that is suitable to their skills, interests, time commitments and health status.

Changes to a volunteer's area of work or time commitment will be made with full consultation.

Supervising teachers will be available to discuss volunteers' concerns as they arise.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that a volunteer is appropriately supervised.

Supervising teachers will meet their duty of care to students by not leaving a volunteer to work unsupervised with students. (Refer to DECS procedures outlined below).

*Where a volunteer **does** work directly with students under the age of 18 the supervision requirements are that the volunteer be visible to a staff member. This does not mean that the*

volunteer must be in the staff member's line of sight at all times. However it **does** mean that the staff member can quickly and easily view the volunteer from within their work area.

Examples of **acceptable** supervision include having a volunteer working in a corridor or porch area while the staff member teaches in the adjacent classroom, or, a volunteer using a section of the resource centre that can be viewed by a range of staff.

Examples of **unacceptable** supervision include leaving a volunteer alone in a separate classroom or building, having a volunteer involved in duties associated with change rooms, sickrooms or toileting, and sending a volunteer on student excursions without a supervising staff member.

Where a volunteer assists with transport, site managers must be mindful of requirements such as parental consent and ensuring that **groups** of students rather than individuals travel with a volunteer.

... Supervisors sometimes have to make very quick judgements about relative risks. When they do so they should try to keep their duty of care to students as their first priority and not be influenced by issues such as adults' sensitivities or expediency. They should also be mindful of the relative vulnerabilities of students. **From a duty of care perspective our most vulnerable groups are the very young, the intellectually disabled, the physically disabled; those newly arrived in Australia with English as their second language and the emotionally deprived.**

(Procedures for the Management of Volunteers in DECS Preschools and Schools (updated 2007) pages 2-3)

## **VOLUNTEERS' RESPONSIBILITIES**

The volunteer's most important responsibility relates to his/her duty of care to students. Students are a vulnerable group generally, due to their age and lack of experience. Their vulnerability increases if they are very young, if they are students with disabilities.

For volunteers, respecting the rights of students means they must not:

- work unsupervised with students
- be involved in toileting students or assisting with change rooms/sickrooms
- have unsupervised contact with students during break times
- encourage affection from or dependency in students eg by giving presents
- have intentional physical contact with students (the supervising teacher will provide comfort or and/or first aid to a distressed student)
- display bullying or intimidating behaviours towards students.

Volunteers must:

- refer all student concerns or behaviour issues to the supervising teacher
- refer all requests to access school files to the supervising teacher
- sign the time book for volunteers on arrival and departure
- wear the provided name badge at all times
- notify the school as early as possible if they are unable to fulfil their volunteer commitment.

## **CANCELLATION OF AGREEMENT**

When concerns arise about a volunteer, opportunity to remedy a problem or improve an area of concern will be offered wherever appropriate. A volunteer's agreement can be cancelled at the Principal's discretion and where the volunteer;

- has no more suitable work available
- fails to follow requirements outlined in the volunteer policy and elaborated through the induction training
- behaves towards students, parents or staff in a manner deemed inappropriate or improper
- repeatedly fails to meet commitments without notice to the school.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Kilparrin Volunteer Agreement

*Review 2021.*



**VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT**

As a volunteer at *Kilparrin Teaching and Assessment School and Services*, I agree to:

- 1. Work as a volunteer in the area/s of .....
- 2. Discuss any concerns in relation to school matters with the appropriate staff member or a member of the senior management of the school.
- 3. Keep all school related matters confidential and under no circumstances approach parents or community members in relation to issues arising at the school. I understand this is the responsibility of the Principal.
- 4. Abide by the terms and conditions detailed in the volunteer policy.

**As a volunteer**

- 5. I have participated in an induction program and I understand my responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting, occupational health safety & welfare procedures, duty of care to students and confidentiality. I have also received training specific to my area of volunteer work.
- 6. I understand that if I breach any of the above agreements my services as a volunteer may be terminated.

**VOLUNTEER**

Signed ..... Name .....

Date .....

**SCHOOL PRINCIPAL (OR DELEGATE)**

Signed ..... Name .....

Date ..... Title .....



# Procedures for the Management of Volunteers in DECS preschools and schools

Updated 2007

## OVERVIEW

Schools/preschools enjoy widespread support from volunteers. Many of our additional programs for assisting student learning, a wide range of activities such as camps, and services such as canteens are often reliant on the generosity of volunteers.

Site managers and their delegates have a responsibility to support, value and protect volunteers. At the same time they have a very important duty of care to the students in their charge. The purpose of these procedures is to highlight the role site managers have in ensuring a balance between the rights of volunteers and the welfare of the students they support.

The Administrative Instructions and Guidelines on this matter state "... the principal or supervising teacher is under a duty of care to ensure that the volunteer possesses the necessary skills and is not a potential threat to the health, safety and welfare of students." (*Section 1 paragraph 99 of the AIGs, Schooling Sector. Legal liability and management of volunteers.*)

This instruction has obvious implications for the selection, induction and supervision of volunteers in schools and preschools. Given the diversity of roles volunteers play, the approach to selection and induction and the level of required supervision will vary. However, where volunteers work directly with students, managers must be thorough in the manner in which they select and train volunteers and diligent in the supervision they provide. Appropriate management of volunteers in close contact with students ensures that all groups involved are protected; the volunteer, the students and the institution.

While a comprehensive DECS policy on volunteers is being developed these procedures are available to support staff in developing or refining appropriate volunteer management practices. These procedures are also available on the DECS website [www.decs.sa.gov.au](http://www.decs.sa.gov.au).

## SELECTION/SCREENING PROCEDURES

As a general rule the closer a volunteer works with students, particularly in a one to one situation, the more thorough the selection and screening needs to be. Those responsible for managing volunteers need to take into account the work involved and the level of risk represented for the volunteer and the student/s concerned. A volunteer who covers books in the resource centre need not be screened in the same way as a person who assists with physical coordination training or in a reading recovery program.

Because the screening process for each volunteer should be appropriate to the work they undertake, a change in the volunteer's work may necessitate a further screening process. For example, a volunteer who was initially recruited to support the grounds person should not automatically begin assisting with an outdoor education program, no matter how long he/she has been working at the school. The fact that direct contact with students is required in the new work necessitates a review of the initial screening.

The objective for managers of volunteers is to feel confident that volunteers are performing work within their capabilities and that students are safe in their contact with volunteers.

Managers can use any combination of the following selection/screening steps in satisfying themselves that a volunteer is suitable to undertake the work described.

Site managers must be aware of which volunteers do and do not require criminal history screening checks.

The [Screening and Criminal History Checks Policy Guidelines](#) outlines the guiding principles for screening and describes the screening requirements for various groups who seek to volunteer to work in education and care sites.

1. Requesting permission to conduct a [police check](#) (which will be paid for by the preschool or school) by contacting the Criminal History Screening unit on 8226 2250.
2. Personal knowledge of and consequential confidence in the applicant.
3. The personal knowledge and confidence of other colleagues at the site.
4. Interviewing. It is appropriate to use an interview as a means of inquiring into an individual's background, ascertaining motives and determining knowledge and skill levels.
5. References. Managers can ask for written or oral references that attest to a person's character or confirm work abilities.
6. Reference checks. With the volunteer's knowledge, managers can verify references by contacting referees directly, seeking validation of information provided and asking further questions.
7. Seeking further information. Given that managers need to establish a level of confidence about an applicant's suitability they can seek whatever further information is required for them to achieve that confidence. However, this process of further inquiry must be conducted openly, not surreptitiously. The applicant must be informed in advance of the sourcing of additional information. (Examples might be proof of residence, proof of qualifications, etc)

## INDUCTION

Just as new staff require induction to a site, so too do volunteers. Relevant sections of the induction program provided to new staff can be used with volunteers. It is important that volunteers have access to much of the information usually provided in a staff handbook. Site managers can delegate induction responsibilities to a range of staff, or a volunteer with the relevant expertise. Volunteers themselves have a responsibility to contribute to their induction by seeking information and assistance as they require it.

### Essential Induction Requirements

- [Mandatory Notification](#) Volunteers who work with students are mandated notifiers. They must therefore receive the most recent guidelines for reporting child abuse and be given opportunity to discuss the guidelines with a relevant staff member. Training could be provided by districts/clusters. The South Australian Association of School Parent clubs (phone 1800 724 640) run [mandatory notification programs](#) for volunteers at no cost.
- Occupational Health Safety and Welfare procedures In addition to general information on these procedures consideration must be given to the particular area of the site where the volunteer will be working and the specific safety requirements of that area.
- General Duty of Care to Students In order to understand their obligations to students, volunteers should be aware of the site's • Behaviour management and harassment policies
- Requirements regarding supervision, as outlined below, and confidentiality (both on the site and within the community).
- Training specific to their area of work.

## SUPERVISION REQUIREMENTS

Site managers are responsible for ensuring that a volunteer is appropriately supervised. What is considered to be appropriate supervision will vary according to the work performed. Where a volunteer does not have direct contact with students the level of supervision will be negotiated between the volunteer and the manager and will include compliance with all relevant guidelines such as the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare requirements.

Where a volunteer **does** work directly with students under the age of 18 the supervision requirements are the same as the above but with the additional requirement that the volunteer be visible to a staff member. This does not mean that the volunteer must be in the

staff member's line of sight at all times. However it **does** mean that the staff member can quickly and easily view the volunteer from within their work area.

Examples of **acceptable** supervision include having a volunteer working in a corridor or porch area while the staff member teaches in the adjacent classroom, or, a volunteer using a section of the resource centre that can be viewed by a range of staff.

Examples of **unacceptable** supervision include leaving a volunteer alone in a separate classroom or building, having a volunteer involved in duties associated with change rooms, sickrooms or toileting, and sending a volunteer on student excursions without a supervising staff member.

Where a volunteer assists with transport, site managers must be mindful of requirements such as parental consent and ensuring that **groups** of students rather than individuals travel with a volunteer.

Schools and pre schools are dynamic and unpredictable environments. It is not possible to describe all the scenarios that can and do arise for staff and volunteers working with students. Supervisors sometimes have to make very quick judgements about relative risks. When they do so they should try to keep their duty of care to students as their first priority and not be influenced by issues such as adults' sensitivities or expediency. They should also be mindful of the relative vulnerabilities of students. From a duty of care perspective our most vulnerable groups are the very young, the intellectually disabled, the physically disabled; those newly arrived in Australia with English as their second language and the emotionally deprived.

## **RECORD KEEPING**

All sites working with volunteers must maintain accurate records. It is recommended that the following information be recorded.

- Notes of the selection/screening process used.
- Dates when volunteer begins and exits.
- Description of the work undertaken
- Rolls kept of the students working with the volunteer.
- Names of staff members to whom the volunteer reports.
- Dates and details of any concerns raised by the volunteer and action taken.
- Dates and details of any concerns raised by others about the volunteer and action taken.
- Any changes to the original work description and additional screening if conducted.

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[Criminal History Screening Website](#)