



VOLUNTEER



Foundation
to
Year 12

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[Volunteer Policy]

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the processes that Sirius College will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child-safe environment as well as to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

SCOPE

This document applies to all types of volunteers who assist regularly, irregularly or on a one-off basis at the College. Examples of volunteer work within the school include but are not limited to:

- Coaching and managing sporting teams;
- Assisting with theatre and musical productions;
- Canteen/barbeque duty;
- Reading and learning support;
- Assisting with excursions, weekend activities, picnic for students/parents, and overnight camps;
- Assisting with school events and functions; and
- Traffic safety attendants.

The Board of Directors lie outside the scope of this policy, however, remain as volunteers for the College. For further information, please refer to the [Board Governance Handbook](#).

DEFINITIONS

College: Sirius College

Confidential Information: means all information relating to:

- the School's business, current and future students and parents, suppliers, financial affairs, commercial, economic and educational policies of the School; and
- the methods, processes, systems, techniques, practices and procedures employed by the School.

School work: means:

- carrying out the functions of The College
- any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the College, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
- any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school Board
- providing any assistance in the work of the school

Volunteer: a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work, without payment or reward.

Child-related work: Child related work takes place when a person has direct contact with children as a normal part of their duties. Direct contact with children can mean face-to-face, physical, oral, written or electronic contact.

WWCC: Working With Children Check

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The College

The College must ensure:

- the volunteer has a Working with Children Check in all cases whether the person has direct or non-direct contact with children unless the volunteer is exempted. If a person is a VIT registered teacher or current police officer, he/she will be exempted to hold WWCC.
- interviewing and engaging the volunteer in accordance with equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.
- the volunteer is given a safe and healthy environment, meaningful work in a well-managed workplace.

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- providing an induction program for a prospective volunteer addressing their obligations under the Child Safety Standards and other mandatory reporting legislations.
- providing information about the school to the volunteer, including its policies and procedures, and the Volunteer Policy.
- the period of time that the volunteer will offer his/her services and the tasks to be undertaken.
- providing sufficient training and ongoing support to enable the volunteers to undertake the tasks.
- receive the level of supervision required for them to do their assigned role.
- recognition and respectful of cultural values and perspectives.
- taking all reasonable steps to remove or reduce the risk, when the College is aware that a volunteer poses a risk of abuse to a child under the care.
- assessing the allegations as soon as possible after becoming aware of a reportable allegation involving a volunteer, so that the incident is recorded and managed according to [Incident Management](#) Policy.
- the volunteers are aware of the colleges' Emergency Procedures.

Volunteers

All volunteers must

- comply with any reasonable direction of the Campus Principal, Director of Human Resources and Director of Operations or their representatives.
- comply with this policy and the school's other policies and procedures, including but not limited to;
 - Child Safety Policy
 - Child Safety Code of Conduct.
 - Code of Conduct
 - Staff & Student Professional Boundaries
 - Emergency Management Plan
 - Privacy Policy
 - Incident Management Policy
- allow the College staff members to deal with disciplinary issues.
- establish and maintain a rapport with students and their parents based on mutual respect.
- act ethically and responsibly at all times
- be accountable for their own actions and decisions.
- work collaboratively with staff and other volunteers.
- ensure that the volunteer's conduct is consistent with the values of the school and does not damage the reputation of the school.
- comply with the school dress code,
- give a call or email to the relevant staff member(s) at the College, if a volunteer is unable to meet the commitment.

RECRUITMENT

Sirius College is responsible for creating a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe. Sirius College is committed to protecting children and this has been embedded in the school's leadership, governance, culture and policies.

The college recognises that volunteers may bring benefits to students and the school community. The Campus Principal and or their nominee must identify and define their staffing and volunteer needs to build out strategies to attract the right person to fulfill those requirements.

For a person to be a genuine volunteer, it is important to identify and define the essential characteristics of a volunteering relationship which include:

- The intention of both parties is to not create a legally binding employment relationship.
- The volunteer is under no obligation to attend the workplace, perform work and is able to leave at their own discretion when required, without legal repercussions.
- The volunteer does not expect to be remunerated for the services offered. This means modern awards and enterprise agreements do not apply to the work performed.

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School leaders must ensure volunteers:

- are recruited using an open and planned approach to attract volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge, skills or attributes,
- are selected based on interest, knowledge and skills or attributes relevant to the role,
- are not discriminated against and that there is equal opportunity for all,
- are given relevant information about the school, their role and the recruitment and selection process,
- meet screening and suitability requirements,
- are advised that if their relevant history changes after their appointment – for example, if they are charged or convicted of an offence that could be relevant to the risk of harm to children – they must let school leaders know immediately.

Assessment Procedure

Application

All candidates must submit an application for approval using an online form along with the required documents and certificates by the time of application. The applicant will be notified at every stage of the process via the system.

Assessment / Approval

Assessing suitability

In assessing what suitability checks should be made, the school must adopt appropriate risk mitigation strategies. Strategies may include:

- considering how much time the individual spends on school premises to perform their work and will be able to move freely around the school without staff members accompanying them or near staff members while children are present,
- considering the nature of the volunteer role and the skills and abilities required to undertake the role proficiently,
- possess knowledge, skills and abilities positively contributing to educational outcomes and the learning environment of students.

Collecting required documentation

The College must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record information about a person who they are proposing to engage in child-connected work, in accordance with legal requirements and school policy. This may include:

- confirming identity e.g. driver's licence or other photo identification,
- Evidence of WWCC. If exempted, relevant registration check including VIT teacher registration and police check.
- confirming professional qualifications including First Aid Training, Anaphylaxis Management, Food Handling certificates,
- National Police Record Check, if needed,
- personal references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.

Volunteer Register

If the assessment of the applicant is successful and approved by a relevant authority, the details of the applicant will be entered into the Volunteer Register. The register will be published on the Sirius Expert website for all staff members to access the details of volunteers approved.

No volunteer is permitted to be assigned as a volunteer at the College unless the candidate is approved. Each registration is valid for 3 years and must be renewed when expires. No volunteer is permitted for an indefinite time period to be involved in any activity at the College or organised by the College.

Induction

It is essential that all volunteers undergo a comprehensive induction before commencing at the College as a volunteer. The induction process at the College should communicate the school's values, policies and procedures

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to new volunteers and include an introduction to their role and their immediate work area. It is also a means by which information and resources are provided to a new volunteer in a timely manner.

It is crucial to use the induction period to discuss child safety and the pivotal role it plays in ensuring child safety within the College. In accordance with the child safety standards, volunteers should be provided with:

- The Child Safety Policy
- The Child Safety Code of Conduct
- The Code of Conduct
- Information on other relevant practices and procedures

The Volunteer induction [checklist](#) should be used as a guide as to what should be covered for a new volunteer to be ready to enter the workplace.

Ongoing Training

Volunteers may be given the opportunity for training to meet the requirements and skills of certain roles. The nature of the training may be conducted internally or externally subject to the nature of the role, the College may in certain circumstances meet the training costs.

The training provided may be in the areas including but not limited to:

- Food Safety (please refer to the [Food Safety and Handling Policy](#))
- Child Safety (please refer to the [Child Safety Policy](#))
- Use of ICT (please refer to the [Acceptable Use of ICT for staff](#) Policy)
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Educational Support
- First Aid and CPR Training

Some volunteers may already possess qualifications and/or experience in particular areas which the College can utilise for the achievement of student outcomes.

IMPLEMENTATION

The College recognises the value of volunteers in contributing to the school community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Volunteers may have a wide range of interests, skills and abilities that can complement our programs, thus giving a wider range of interactions and experiences to our students.

The College wants to

- welcome the involvement of community members in assisting within the school,
- provide all volunteers with a safe working environment,
- publicise volunteer opportunities throughout the wider school community to provide all interested people with the opportunity to volunteer,
- ensure that the contribution of volunteers aligns with the school's vision and mission,
- provide appropriate support and/or instruction to volunteers to help them carry out their tasks at the school,
- meet the requirements of all relevant legislation, particularly legislation that pertains to matters of workplace safety and child safety, and
- publicly recognise the contribution of volunteers within the school.

Benefits of Volunteering

Volunteers play an integral part in supporting the work of the College.

The benefits of volunteers include they:

- provide education with a broader resource base from which to draw positive opportunities for children and young people.
- enhance community participation and parent involvement

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- expand the social, cultural and educational outcomes for children and young people
- provide a safer environment for children and young people
- make a positive difference for children and young people.

Benefits to volunteers include:

- a sense of purpose that enhances their feelings of belonging and happiness.
- making new friendships and a professional network
- an opportunity to learn new skills.

Volunteer Rights

A volunteer who offers their services to the College will have rights such as:

- a healthy and safe environment, as a volunteer is covered under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic).
- not be discriminated against or harassed by the employer, employees, other volunteers, community members etc. as volunteers are covered under the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and other anti-discrimination legislation.
- be protected by appropriate insurance, such as public liability insurance, as a volunteer is not covered by WorkCover.
- not attend on a particular day or for a period of time, although the person may have previously agreed to provide their services on a particular day or for a specific period of time.
- decide to discontinue the volunteering arrangement at any time.
- be reimbursed for any out-of-pocket expenses.
- be provided with an induction to the school.

Grievance Management

The College is committed to providing a safe, harmonious, supportive and productive environment. Volunteers have the right to have their grievances addressed. The College defines a grievance as unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment, victimisation, vilification, conflict and/or bullying. Volunteers have the legal and ethical right to:

- raise any concern or complaint related to unfair treatment, discrimination, harassment, vilification, bullying and other such issues that may involve parties including Sirius staff members, other volunteers or school staff members
- have that concern, problem, complaint or grievance dealt with confidentiality, fairly, effectively, within an appropriate time frame, and with due regard for procedural fairness
- receive appropriate support and information regarding proceedings
- be informed of the outcomes of proceedings.

Nature of Relationship

It is essential that a volunteering relationship is not or does not become an employment relationship providing eligibility to the provisions based on the relevant award. It will be up to the supervisor of the volunteer/s to ensure that the volunteering relationship does not become formal enough to warrant the relationship of the volunteer and the College to be of an employment nature.

Be wary of the following points in order to not unintentionally create an employment relationship with the volunteer.

A volunteer may be deemed an employee of the College in the following circumstances:

- If a volunteer provides services in accordance with a regular roster.
- If a volunteer is expected/required to provide their services for the same number of days each week on a recurring basis.
- If a certain function or job of the College cannot operate without the volunteers' services.

Termination of Relationship

The College may end a volunteer's relationship without notice if the volunteer's action or behaviour does not comply with any element of the Code of Conduct. Such action or behaviour must be referred to as 'suspected

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misconduct' until a decision is made that the action or behaviour amounts to a breach of the Code by a person appointed in accordance with the [Misconduct Procedure](#).

Confidentiality and Privacy

A volunteer may receive or overhear confidential information regarding students, staff or other volunteers. All volunteers are expected to respect the rights, privacy and dignity of all students, teachers and the general school community.

All volunteers must comply with the [Privacy Policy](#).

Access to School Systems

No volunteer is allowed to access and use any of the school systems which means no account will be created for any volunteer. If a volunteer has already got an account (e.g. former staff members, CRT etc), the IT Department must ensure those accounts are deactivated.

If a volunteer is required to use the school systems as part of their role, the permission should be referred to the Executive Management for approval.

Volunteers who may need information from the systems in place must request the information from their supervisor at the relevant campus. If it is appropriate to share the information, the supervisor of the volunteer should provide this information.

If a volunteer requests any sensitive information, the relevant staff member must ask for permission from the Campus Management.

Use of Social Media

Privacy is important to our students, staff, parents and school community. We ask that you do not post photos of students, staff, parents or other volunteers to your social media accounts.

Volunteers must not use social media to:

- post offensive, inappropriate, disparaging or defamatory comments or material about the College, its students, staff, parents or volunteers on his/her social media account,
- make false or misleading claims about the College, on his/her social media account.

Health and Safety

Volunteers have the responsibility under the Occupational Health and Safety legislation to take care of their health and safety and others, including both the physical and psychological well-being of individuals.

Volunteers must report all incidents, injuries, near misses or hazards that they witness or identify that require immediate attention using the school systems available. Failure to report will be considered misconduct.

In the unfortunate event of an emergency, volunteers are required to adhere to the college's Emergency procedures. Volunteers are also required to respect and adhere to the decisions a chief warden and/or their nominee makes during any emergency.

Administration of prescribed medication to students should only be undertaken by the College staff members per school policy.

Volunteers can access benefits for accidental death or injury whilst assigned to activities for the College.

Sign in/out

All volunteers before commencing their work at school must report to the reception to sign in and receive a "Volunteer" lanyard. The lanyard will be worn throughout the day.

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Before the volunteer departs from the school grounds, they will need to report to the reception to sign out and return the "Volunteer" lanyard.

Volunteer Recognition

The College encourages campus management and staff members to express appreciation to volunteers for their efforts. This appreciation can best be expressed, for example by organising a morning tea or presentation/acknowledgement of their efforts at school assemblies attended by parents and students or other such activities.

Supervision of Volunteers

During a visit to the School, each volunteer should be designated to a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible.

RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. [Code of Conduct](#)
2. [Child Safety](#)
3. [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
4. [Staff & Student Professional Boundaries](#)
5. [Communicable Disease](#)
6. [Food Safety & Handling](#)
7. [First Aid](#)
8. [Anaphylaxis Management](#)
9. [Acceptable Use of ICT for staff](#)
10. [Feedback \(Complaint - Concern - Compliment\) Management](#)
11. [Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace](#)
12. [Conflict of Interest](#)

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