

2018



VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

OUR BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

We believe that children learn best:

When all the members of our community have a common goal, interact positively and are mutually supportive

When the environment is welcoming, non-threatening and inclusive

In a challenging and motivating environment that encourages risk taking

Where effort and achievement is acknowledged and celebrated

Where responsibility for learning is encouraged

When experiences are engaging, relevant, active and purposeful

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Sacred Heart Mona Vale - Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you for becoming a class volunteer. Your contribution is valued and appreciated by both the class teacher and the school community of Sacred Heart. Volunteering is an unpaid position, however there are many rewards. It promotes and develops relationships with teachers, students and parents. You will have a better understanding of the learning process and enhance students' learning.

Role of the Teacher

The teacher is the professional educator in the classroom with the responsibility for the teaching and learning of **all** students in the class. Therefore the teacher is responsible for:

- Organising the classroom
- Grouping the students
- Planning and delivering the program
- Monitoring the learning
- Making informed, professional decisions about students individual needs
- Communicating formally and informally with students and parents about teaching and learning programs and individual progress.

Role of parent volunteers

In order for your experience to be pleasurable and rewarding Sacred Heart has the following expectation:

- Liaise with the teacher
- Support the teacher's educational program through a variety of classroom tasks/activities.
- Provide individual or group support.
- Keep the group or individual on task
- Encourage positive behaviour
- At all times maintain confidentiality



We hope the following information supports you in your volunteer activity at Sacred Heart.

1. CONFIDENTIALITY

The time you spend in the classroom is a 'snapshot' of how that class operates and functions on a daily and weekly basis. It is appropriate for volunteers to:

Confidentiality of all members of the school community is respected. Parent volunteers operate on the premise of genuine respect and trust for each student and adult.

Classroom volunteers have many responsibilities, form many relationships and sometimes share sensitive and confidential information. The highest professional ethics must be understood, observed, valued and practised by all participants at all times. Therefore the "Non Negotiable" for Volunteers to ever mention the name of a teacher or child. Nor do they complain about the curriculum or resources in the school.

All volunteers must maintain confidentiality about students and classroom practices. Volunteers are expected to adhere to Sacred Heart's mission and vision statement and consistently apply these values in their role as a volunteer.

Criticism of any child or teacher is not respecting confidentiality.

PLEASE READ AND SIGN CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT AND RETURN TO THE CLASS TEACHER BEFORE COMMENCING.

2. DISCIPLINE

The school has a clearly defined Student Behaviour Management Policy.

Parent Volunteers support the Discipline Code of the school and refer all discipline problems directly to the classroom teacher.

Volunteers are encouraged to build a positive relationship with the child and actively encourage positive behaviour at all times. It is not the role of the volunteer to enforce discipline, nor accept inappropriate behaviour. The assistance of the teacher is to be requested if problems occur.

3. PRESENCE of PRESCHOOLERS

Family involvement is central to the culture of Catholic schools. However, the attendance of toddlers/ preschoolers within classrooms and excursions is not able to be accommodated as it distracts students from their learning.

4. CONTACT with YOUR CHILD

Parents may occasionally work with their own child but need to provide support to the teacher and general classroom members. Volunteers may not be allocated to work with their own child.

All volunteers should chat with their child to explain their role and responsibilities prior to first commencing their voluntary activities.

5. ATTENDANCE

Volunteers need to let the class teacher know if they are unable to attend a session so that the teacher can adjust the learning tasks.

It is expected that the classroom volunteer will maintain the highest respect for regular attendance and appropriate time commitments as negotiated with the classroom teacher.

Classroom volunteers need to sign the visitor's book at the school office and wear a school visitors badge whilst in the school.

6. TRAINING for PARENT VOLUNTEERS

Sacred Heart values the family and school partnership to improve student learning and motivation. Therefore, training will be provided annually by the Assistant Principal (in charge of the school's curriculum).

7. VOLUNTEERS OUTSIDE the CLASSROOM

A variety of excursions are regularly planned throughout the year. These are planned as integral parts of the student's learning. Parent volunteers are encouraged to participate and support group activities.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What if the parent of my volunteer child wants information? What do I tell them? What do I say?**
 - I really enjoy working with, but it's not my role to comment on his/her learning. Why don't you have a chat to the teacher...?
 - I like being a (reading) helper, but can't comment about individual children in my group. We all agreed to respect each child and not chat about their work/learning.....
- **Should I / how do Idiscipline a naughty child in my care?**
 - Use positive comments that affirm your high expectations (see over)
 - If problems discuss with the classroom teacher
- **How /when do I talk to the teacher about concerns I may have about my (volunteer) child?**
 - If concerns need immediate attention, write a message for the teacher to contact you – leaving several appropriate times you are available
- **What do I need to know about reading if I'm a reading volunteer?**
 - Teachers will assist volunteers and explain tasks to be completed.
 - "Conversations about learning.. " with the Assistant Principal will enhance knowledge and understanding in how students learn today.
- **Can I debrief with other volunteers?**
 - NO – maintaining respect for each student is essential
- **Do I go and chat with my own child when volunteering in the classroom?**
 - If appropriate, a smile and/ or quick kiss is always OK. Do not interrupt their own activities or learning groups and remember that older children never like to be embarrassed!
- **What if I'm late – or cannot attend my roster?**
 - Ring the school secretary – leave message for teacher





VOLUNTEERS CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT FORM

I _____ have read the handbook and understand the role and responsibility of a volunteer in the classroom. I will abide by the rules of confidentiality and privacy. I understand that toddlers and preschoolers can not be accommodated in the classroom learning environment.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Thank you for volunteering. Please return this form to the class teacher.

