

ALDGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL
INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS



Introduction

Volunteers are an integral part of our school. Your participation in the work of the school is greatly appreciated and valued. While the welfare of our students is our highest priority, we want to do everything possible to ensure your involvement is a rewarding experience. The following introductory information is provided to ensure that we exercise our responsibility for the safety of our students, and to strengthen our partnership with you. Volunteers who have close contact with students, eg sports coaches, LAP volunteers, and those who assist at camps or similar activities, will receive training and extra information where necessary eg specific skills, safe practices and medical conditions.

Record keeping

The school's administrative staff needs to know who is in the school at any one time, especially in case of emergency, therefore long term visitors/volunteers are required to "sign in" at the front office, or with the supervising teacher for short terms, and "check out" on your departure. Volunteer badges are available when signing in at the office.

Student behaviour

We expect students to treat you with respect and courtesy at all times. If students behave inappropriately, you should tell them that the behaviour is offensive or inappropriate. If the behaviour persists, please seek help from the supervising staff member or senior staff.

Privacy and confidentiality

Schools must comply with Information Privacy Principles regarding the use and release of information. Any personal information (including names, addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances or situations of any nature) about students, staff and volunteers that you become aware of during your volunteer work must not be shared, unless it is required by law, eg. it is relevant for reporting alleged child abuse (*to report a suspected case of child abuse or neglect call the 24 hour Child Abuse Report Line (CARL): 131 478 .*) Please refrain from making any comments about the use of individual teaching methodologies or student behaviour management methods. Volunteers must not discuss or comment on student achievement.

Conversations with students

Remember that you are acting as a role model to the students. Your language and topics of conversation should be above reproach.

Being alone 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 a room alone with a student. You will not be required to mind a class in the absence of a teacher.

Toilets

Please use the staff toilets, and do not enter toilets allocated for student use. You will not be required to assist with the toileting of students, nor with sickroom activities unless specifically designated to do so, eg. when on an excursion.

First Aid

If a student is injured or ill, please advise the supervising teacher or front office as soon as possible. Our first aid officer or other staff member will provide first aid/comfort to an injured or distressed student, and contact parents if necessary.

Duty of Care to students

In order to understand their duty of care obligations in relation to students, volunteers should be aware of site:

- behaviour management and harassment policies
(Refer school website <http://www.aldgateps.sa.edu.au/>)
- requirements regarding supervision and confidentiality (both on the site and within the community)
- training specific to their area of work
- expectations regarding personal conduct and interaction with children and young people.

Public Sector Code of Ethics

All volunteers must abide by the *Code of Ethics for the South Australian Public Sector (attached)* and be made aware of their obligations.

Child Protection

The *Children's Protection Act, 1993* requires DECD staff and volunteers to notify the Department for Families and Communities, through the Child Abuse Report Line (131 478) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected. This responsibility is part of the broad duty of care that staff and volunteers have towards the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Responding to Abuse and Neglect training for volunteers will be provided at time to be advised at Aldgate Primary. Volunteers can also access the training through the South Australian Association of School Parents Clubs (telephone: 1800 724 640) also provide information sessions for volunteers. These sessions are an abridged version of what is presented to staff.

Sexual and racist harassment, and bullying

Under the Equal Opportunity Act, 1984, it is unlawful to subject a student, a fellow employee or volunteer worker to sexual or racist harassment.

The principal or senior staff will investigate any reports of sexual or racist harassment or bullying. We also have staff members who will maintain confidentiality, listen sympathetically and explain the complaint procedures to you. The staff representatives to contact are the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare staff representative or a member of our Personnel Advisory Committee.

Harassment and bullying consist of acts or behaviours that are directed against individuals or groups and are considered to be insulting, offensive, demeaning, humiliating or intimidating. This can include belittling comments, ridicule, graffiti, name-calling, put-down jokes, and attack on property, exclusion, and physical violence.

Smoking

Smoking is not permitted within school grounds.

Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare

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. Special care is needed when lifting heavy objects. Do not be involved in any activity that is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk. Please familiarise yourself with emergency procedures for evacuation, and report all injuries and accidents occurring whilst at the school, to office staff as soon as possible. Further information is available at <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/47427/>

Excursions and Camps.

Parents are often asked to accompany teachers on outings to meet required adult child ratio for supervision. On these occasions the parent is required to act as a supervisor to the group and will be given instructions on their role by the teacher in charge. Exclusive attention to the volunteer's own child is not the intention of the invitation to attend, unless specified.

Insurance

The Commissioner for Public Employment's – '*Standard 1 Volunteers in Government Agencies* Appendix 1 – Insurance arrangements' sets out the conditions under which volunteers are insured whilst undertaking volunteering tasks for DECD. The Government's self-insurance arrangements uniform cover is available to volunteers who assist the department. The cover extends to persons who carry out volunteer duties at the direction of the site leader or governance body.

If a volunteer is assisting a Governing Council which has the South Australian Association of State School Organisation's (SAASSO) Personal Accident Insurance Policy for councillors and volunteers, it must be used first if a claim is made. Volunteers will not be able to claim on both schemes in relation to the same expense. Where a Governing Council does not utilise SAASSO's accident insurance policy, they must engage another broker to set up a Personal Accident Insurance Policy for councillors and volunteers.

Any liability to a third party arising from the action or advice of a volunteer acting in accordance with the principal's or council's instructions is treated as if the action or advice were that of an employee. Volunteers are not employees and, therefore, must not use Workers Compensation forms to report accidents or make claims.

Policies and guidelines

A range of policies and documents concerning the school's operations can be found on the school websites and on the department's web site:

<http://www.aldgateps.sa.edu.au/>

<http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/pages/OSPP/47427/>

Skin Protection Policy.

All DECD sites are required to have a policy on the wearing of appropriate hats when outdoors. Volunteers are asked to wear appropriate protective clothing when outdoors with children and observe the 'Sun Smart' message.

Relevant History Screening Check

The following groups of volunteer parents, care givers and others have been identified for criminal history screening in consideration of their regular contact with and/or their close proximity to children on a regular basis:

- attending any overnight camps/school sleep-overs or billeting programs
- working one to one with children or working in close proximity to children on a regular basis eg LAP, music, drama, coordination skills etc (this includes a parent working regularly with only their own child but in proximity to other children)
- acting as a coach or manager of teams or groups of children and young people
- working in resource centres, offices, managing canteens etc
- accepting a position on governing/school councils, boards or committees. (This is to protect against people adversely influencing the protective climate of an education/care environment through the decisions of committees or boards. The organisation shall determine the screening requirements for each committee).

All prospective volunteers who fall into the above groups will therefore be required to Provide an Relevant History Screening

Criminal history screening checks are not required for one-off guest presentations such as guest speakers, concert performers or for attendance at one-off events such as sports days, and whole of school/centre events.

Obtaining a criminal history clearance

The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) Screening Unit provides relevant history clearances for volunteers in DECD sites. Volunteers requiring a relevant history check clearance must apply to the DCSI Screening Unit through a DECD site leader. Further information is available at the DCSI Screening Unit and DECD websites or from the school Front Office

Thank you for taking the time to read this document.

Kind regards,

Principal
Aldgate Primary School
Ph: 08 8339 2377



CODE OF ETHICS FAST FACTS

The Code of Ethics is the Code of Conduct for the purposes of the *Public Sector Act 2009 (SA)*. The Code applies to, and is binding on, all public sector employees, including all DECD employees employed under the *Children's Services Act*, the *Education Act* and the *Public Sector Act*, regardless of their employment level and status.

Objectives

The Code of Ethics has four objectives for all public sector employees:

- To guide and support professional activities
- To strengthen public confidence
- To earn respect
- To set standards of professional conduct

VALUES

Values are the foundation of ethical behaviour in the South Australian Public Sector.

Democratic values: Loyally serving the government and maintaining political neutrality; administering and complying with rules and regulations; assisting the public to access public information.

Service, respect and courtesy: Providing quality services to SA citizens in a collaborative manner; respecting the value and human dignity of every person; acting impartially, fairly and equitably with respect for citizens' rights; responding to changing needs through teamwork, innovation and creativity.

Honesty and integrity: Acting honestly in every aspect of your work; ensuring transparency and acting impartially when making decisions or providing advice.

Accountability: Always acting within the spirit and to the letter of the law; being accountable to the Minister of Education in regard to delegated authority; working, individually or in structured teams, within a system of performance management, towards clear objectives in order to achieve results.

Professional conduct: Demonstrating the highest standards of professional conduct, as described in the Professional Conduct Standards.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT STANDARDS

The Professional Conduct Standards provide a common framework for the disciplinary provisions of the Code of Ethics, and include the following.

Professional and courteous behaviour: Acting in a reputable manner; complying with lawful and reasonable direction, treating others with respect and courtesy; having appropriate reasons for absence; diligence in discharge of duties.

Public comment: Ensuring that you have the authority to speak in an official capacity; avoiding expressing personal opinions in an official context; awareness of the various forms of communication public comment can take; ensuring you adhere to the guidelines when commenting in a private capacity.

Handling official information: Treating information confidentially; not disclosing official information unless authorised; avoid potential misuse of information; maintaining the integrity and security of information; ensuring the privacy of individuals.

Use of government and public resources: Using work resources and equipment appropriately and efficiently; understanding that resources include physical, technological, financial and intellectual property; recognised that DECD retains ownership of such resources.

Conflicts of interest: Acting impartially and without prejudice; recognising that conflict of interest can be actual or potential; ensuring personal or financial interests do not influence or interfere in your role; disclosing, in writing, any actual or potential conflicts of interest.

Outside employment: As a DECD employee, not engaging in other employment that conflicts with or affects your performance; recognising the need for written permission to be employed outside DECD; obtaining permission for volunteer work if a potential conflict exists; on leaving DECD, avoiding situations of unfair advantage to a new employer.

Acceptance of gifts and benefits: Maintaining impartiality and avoiding undue influence; not seeking or accepting gifts or benefits; understanding that non-pecuniary gifts may be accepted; complying with DECD policies in regard to accepting/declaring or recording of all gifts and benefits of any kind.

Criminal offences: Advising your manager at the earliest opportunity if charged with a criminal offence; complying with all relevant legislation relevant to your role/performance.

Reporting unethical behaviour: Complying with the expectations of DECD in the performance of your duties; reporting unethical behaviour falling within guidelines; being aware of rights and responsibilities of employees under the *Whistleblowers Protection Act 1993*.