



St Michael's Primary School

Volunteer and Helper Protocols

Our Vision

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School we strive to foster hearts of compassion, kindness and forgiveness inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus.

Our Mission

In the coming years, we will give expression to our mission by;

- Being a people of *harmony* in a place of challenge inspired by the Gospels
- Nurturing caring *relationships* that value the dignity of each person
- Providing an authentic *education* for all students that is supportive and empowering
- Taking *stewardship* of God's creation to ensure its preservation

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Volunteer and Helper Protocols
Implemented: February 2019
To be Reviewed Annually

1. Protocols

St Michael's values the partnership between parents, carers and staff as they work together to give students opportunities to be engaged in their learning.

We are grateful for the willingness of members of our school community, such as parents, grandparents and carers to support staff in the classrooms and in other programs and activities such as sport carnivals and excursions.

The safety and wellbeing of our students is a priority. To ensure this the following guidelines for volunteer helpers have been developed.

2. Expectations of Volunteers

Volunteers assisting with activities do so on the understanding that:

- Volunteers contribute to the culture of the school through their positive attitude, actions and words
- The teacher is responsible for the duty of care, safety, wellbeing and care for students
- The teacher is responsible for the programs operating within the classroom, at school or on an excursion.
- Regular volunteers such as those who are classroom helpers are required to hold a current WwVP registration.
- The conduct and manners of volunteers should at all times be acceptable and an appropriate model for students
- Volunteers are asked to co-operate with class teachers and staff to ensure the safety and welfare of students.
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the school when participating in school activities.
- Volunteers will report any child protection concerns or disclosures from students to the classroom teacher or school leadership team (Principal, Assistant Principal or Religious Education Coordinator).
- Volunteers are asked to follow the school's emergency evacuation procedures at the time of any emergency or practice drill.
- Volunteers will maintain the confidentiality and privacy of students, staff and school families.
- Volunteers understand that they are not to take pictures of children undertaking activities and should not share information or make comments about activities they are involved in to others or through social networking sites.
- Volunteers will follow school and Catholic Education protocols and procedures to raise any concerns in relation to students, staff or other members of the school community.
- Parent helpers are to help all children, not just their own - all children are to be treated fairly.
- Volunteers understand that volunteering sessions are not appropriate times to have parent/teacher discussions about their child - other times to do this can be arranged via phone/email communication.
- Volunteers understand that they are to report to a teacher any inappropriate behaviour and that it is the teacher's responsibility to monitor and address this.
- Volunteers proceed to the front office to sign out at the end of their session. This is not an occasion to move to other spaces in the school.
- Volunteers must use staff amenities and not those provided for student use.

3. What Resources May I Need as A Parent Helper?

In order to succeed with children in groups and as individuals, a parent helper needs;

- To have a positive attitude towards the child or children they are involved with
- To help support the class teacher
- To be able to keep the children's behaviour in perspective – different students learn in different ways and at different rates
- To be patient and tolerant
- To be able to display a sense of humour
- To be positive and give lots of positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour
- To be flexible and take a problem solving approach
- To be prepared for setbacks and changes
- To be consistent and persevere
- To be aware that "confidentially" means not talking about children except to the class teacher.

Try to avoid:

- Becoming emotionally involved
- Thinking you have to solve all the child's problems
- Talking about or sharing information about children with others.

4. Working with Vulnerable People Requirements

Volunteering and helping in classrooms and on activities on a regular basis at the school will require you to hold a current Working with Vulnerable People registration. Details as to how to obtain this registration can be found at

https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/app/answers/detail/a_id/1804/~/working-with-vulnerable-people-%28wwvp%29-registration

Those who only volunteer for less than 3 days in any four-week period and 7 days in a 12-month period are not required to hold a current WwVP registration. These volunteers are required to complete the 'Working with Vulnerable People Declaration' form. This form is provided by the school.

This verification must be finalised before the volunteer / helper can commence working with Children. Copies of either the WwVP registration Card or the declaration form must be given to the office administration staff to keep on file.

5. Signing In / Signing Out

All volunteers are required to sign in and out at the school office. A visitor pass will be issued and must be worn for identification purposes.

These procedures are vital for staff to be able to identify who is on site particularly in the event of an emergency.

6. Child Protection

All members of our school community are committed to ensure the safety of our students at school and at home. Child Protection protocols for staff and volunteer helpers working with students include:

- No staff member or volunteer should be working or meeting with students in a room by themselves.
- No staff member or volunteer should share personal information with students.
- **If a student discloses information which may indicate they are the victim of any reportable behaviour then this must be reported to the Principal immediately.** If the Principal is not on the school site then the concern must be reported to either a member of the school's leadership team (Principal, Assistant Principal or REC) or a member of staff.
- Should a student disclose any information relating to child protection concerns, the volunteer should not ask any further questions relating to the matter so that we do not hinder further investigations.
- Volunteer helpers should not discuss any concerns they may have relating to the child protection of our students with other staff or members of the school community except as noted above

7. Confidentiality

All students enrolled in the school and staff are protected by Privacy legislation.

As a visitor to the classroom you may become aware of information which should not be shared with others outside the classroom or school; for example, children with additional needs, on behaviour programs or information that a student may share with you.

Appendix 1 is a Volunteers Agreement Form for you to sign that declares that you are aware that such information needs to remain confidential, and should not be discussed outside of the classroom. Should this occur, your volunteer arrangements will be reviewed.

This is for your protection, as well as for the protection of your own child and the other students in the class.

The school also requests that similar courtesy be given to the staff. If you have concerns regarding a staff member, please follow the guidelines for grievance matters found on the school's website.

8. Student Safety

In the event of an accident, or emergency first aid should be rendered by staff and the office informed, so that parents can be contacted and medical help arranged

All accidents must have a written accident report completed. You may be asked to assist with the completion of such a form.

First aid supplies are available in the office along with portable first aid kits for excursions.

If a student reports to a volunteer that they are feeling unwell, please bring this to the attention of the teacher.

9. Accidents to Staff Members, Volunteer Helpers or Visitors to the School

Staff and volunteer helpers should adopt safe work practices in all that they do. Any potential safety hazard must be reported to a member of staff. Staff must refer any safety matters of concern to the Work Health and Safety Staff Rep for consideration. Any accident to a staff member or volunteer should be reported to the office.

Should an accident occur, the following procedures should be followed;

1. Check for immediate safety of all students
2. Send for assistance to the school office
3. The Principal should be called to any accident not considered minor
4. An Accident/Incident report should be filled in and signed as soon as possible after the accident. This form should be completed by the teacher who may request information from volunteers who may have witnessed the incident. Support services can be access (eg school counsellor) for any volunteer or visitor who may witness or be involved in a traumatic incident. Staff have access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

10. Student Behaviour

Volunteers are requested to report any concerns regarding a student behaviour to the teacher.

Student behaviour should only be addressed by a staff member and not volunteers.

11. Evacuation, Lockdown and Lockout Procedures and Student Safety

a. Evacuation

In the event of an evacuation, a continuous siren and evacuation message will be announced. Students are escorted to the evacuation point on the school oval via the safest route, where they are accounted for and remain safely supervised until the all clear is given. Any parents who are visiting the school during an evacuation should proceed to the evacuation point with the class and their teacher who they are visiting.

b. Lockdown / Lockout

In the event of a Lockdown, a siren and lockdown message will be announced. In the event of a Lockout, a siren will also occur with a lockout message.

A lockdown is defined as a more serious event where the school is locked down and students, staff and visitors sit out of sight on the floor.

A lockout is in the event where students, staff and visitors can maintain their regular activities but remain inside the school buildings.

Teachers in both circumstances secure students in their classroom, marking the roll and maintaining a secure environment until the all clear sounds. Any volunteer helper who is working with a group of children at the time of a lockdown or lockout is to remain with the class and their teacher.

Other visitors at the school at the time of a lockdown or lockout should proceed to the nearest classroom or office for a secure waiting spot. No parent or visitor is to attempt to access a classroom (other than the one closest to them during a lockdown/lockout) as teachers need to be able to account for all persons under their care.

After the 'All Clear' has been given after a lockdown/lockout, volunteer helpers and visitors are to immediately return to the school Office where they signed in at, so that office staff can verify that helpers and visitors are safe.

c. Instructions During an Emergency

It is very important that parents follow the directions of St Michael's staff during any emergency procedure. Whilst we appreciate your concern for your child, our staff are trained in how to react and follow school safety procedures. No child will be released to a parent in an emergency situation unless the teacher is confident that it is safe to do so.



Appendix 1 – Volunteers Agreement Form

Please complete this form if you intend on volunteering for school events/functions during school time. Please complete and return to the Front Office prior to your volunteer session. We will provide you with a copy of the signed document and the original will remain on file at school.

As a volunteer of St Michael's Primary School, I am aware that I need to have a current Working with Vulnerable People registration or complete a 'Working with Vulnerable People Declaration' form prior to commencing my volunteering duties.

I will respect the privacy and dignity of all students, families and staff and will follow correct procedures if a problem or concern arises.

I will communicate with students, staff and other parents at all times in a manner that is respectful and appropriate.

I will follow directions given to me by St Michael's Primary School staff whilst I am a volunteer in the school.

I will not discuss the progress, work standard or behaviour of students outside the classroom.

Should I have concerns, I will raise them with the classroom teacher directly at an appropriate time and not discuss these concerns with other parents or community members.

I understand that volunteering sessions are not appropriate times to have parent/teacher discussions about my child/children and that I am able to arrange another time to talk to the teacher via phone/email communication.

Should a student disclose any information or if I have concerns relating to a child protection issue, then I will report them immediately to the Principal, member of the school leadership team or the teacher.

I understand that should I breach any of the protocols outlined in the Volunteers and Helpers Protocols document, my position as a volunteer may be re-assessed.

I have read the Volunteers and Helpers Protocols document.

Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Students at St Michael's related to me are:

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

Student Name: _____ Class: _____

