



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

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## VOLUNTEERS CODE OF CONDUCT FOR WORKING WITH STUDENTS

### RATIONALE:

- Nhill Lutheran School is privileged to have many parents and volunteers assisting students, staff and the school as a whole to fulfill our mission to provide a *“A Christ centred quality education for all.”*
- We seek to provide an open and friendly learning environment, which values and actively encourages volunteers to support learning in the classroom, on excursions and camps, at sporting events and special school occasions.
- At the same time we recognise our duty of care to ensure a safe environment for our students and staff, and we recognise our responsibility to clearly outline expectations of volunteers in the school.
- The safety and well-being of each child must be the paramount consideration in every situation.

### AIMS:

- To establish protocols and procedures for volunteers in the school.
- For volunteers to work under the supervision and guidance of teachers to assist and support their learning in the school.

### IMPLEMENTATION:

#### 1. Selection Procedure

Volunteers are actively encouraged to participate in school activities and will be invited to do so. Nhill Lutheran School believes volunteers can make a significant contribution to the school community by giving their time and sharing their God-given skills, talents and expertise with others. The interests and abilities of volunteers add significantly to the human resources available to a school, thus providing a wider range of interactions, opportunities and experiences for students. Helpers will be asked to assist in classes or other activities where there is the most need for individual or group support. Class teachers will ensure helpers are briefed and prepared to carry out the tasks required of them.

Volunteers will be assessed for their suitability to assist at the school by the Principal and staff. This assessment will be made in relation to the skills and contribution being offered and after verification of the person's good character.

Volunteers offering to assist in programs where students are involved will be asked to:

- Speak with the Principal;
- Participate in induction training;

- Complete a Classroom Helper Detail Form and a Working With Children Check;
- Make themselves available to attend Valuing Safe Communities training.

The Principal's decision is final in determining who is eligible to assist as a volunteer in the school. Any applicant not accepted for volunteering will be advised verbally or in writing.

## **2. Application Process:**

- Make informal contact with the school to ascertain school needs or respond to a request from a staff member;
- Apply to the school using the Application Form available at the Front Office.

Successful applicants will be provided with Volunteer Induction Training including:

- OH&S procedures;
- Duty of Care responsibilities to students;
- Confidentiality requirements;
- Training specific to the area of volunteering.

## **3. The School's Responsibility to Classroom Helpers:**

- A staff member will be allocated to supervise the volunteer at all times, directly or indirectly in the area in which he/she is assisting. The volunteer role may include duties not only in the classroom but also outside including excursions and camps.
- Accurate records will be kept of a classroom helper's training and assistance details.
- Classroom helpers will be provided with a Volunteer badge.

## **4. Classroom Helpers' responsibilities:**

It is essential for all helpers to sign in when entering the premises and then wear a volunteer badge throughout the whole time that they are at the School.

The Classroom helpers' most important responsibility relates to his/her Duty of Care to children.

For Classroom Helpers, respecting the rights of children means they must not:

- have unsupervised contact with students (other than their own child) during break times;
- be involved in toileting students (other than their own child) or assisting with change rooms/sick rooms;
- encourage affection from or dependency in students e.g. by giving gifts;
- initiate or encourage intentional physical contact with students including their own child;
- act differently towards his/her own child (there should be no difference in the way the volunteer interacts with his/her own child and other children);
- display bullying or intimidating behaviour towards students;
- initiate out of hours contact with students;
- have students as friends on social media websites, phone or text.

For Volunteers, respecting the rights of children means they must adhere to the following:

- activities in which the volunteer is involved must take place under the direct or indirect supervision of the teacher;
- if a volunteer has a concern regarding the behaviour of a student and associated discipline issues they must report these to the student's teacher. It is then the responsibility of the teacher to deal with these matters. Our students and volunteers

are encouraged and expected to cooperate, be polite and well behaved. Bullying and harassment is not tolerated.

- since as a volunteer worker you may be privy to information that is sensitive or private and needs to remain at school, you must always maintain the strictest confidentiality. Any concerns you may have regarding this information should be raised with the class teacher outside class teaching time. Speaking to anybody else would be a breach of confidentiality. Privacy legislation and confidentiality in the school setting are very serious matters that cannot be stressed too often. If confidentiality issues are compromised, the support provided by the classroom helper will need to be reviewed as there may well be legal implications arising from such a breach;
- at no time to discuss a child's learning or behaviour with anyone other than the child's teacher or the school Principal;
- must direct parents to make an appointment with the classroom teacher if they make an enquire regarding a student's progress,
- let the classroom teacher know as soon as possible if unable to attend at the negotiated time;
- recognise that teaching, programming and classroom organisation is the responsibility of the classroom teacher;
- not comment about a teacher's classroom teaching practices, either to the teacher or to others (other than the Principal). This is a serious breach of trust and confidentiality and undermines the teacher in question. If confidentiality issues are compromised, the support provided by the volunteer helper will need to be reviewed as there may well be legal implications arising from such a breach. The classroom helper should, however, report any concerns about a teacher's practice to the Principal;
- conduct themselves in a manner in and out of school consistent with their position as a positive role model to children and as representatives of Nhill Lutheran School;
- treat all students (including their own children) with respect through appropriate tone of voice and manner;
- uphold and promote the school when talking with parents or members of the wider school community.

Classroom helpers must also:

- become familiar with and support the school's First Aid and Emergency Procedures;

##### **5. Cancellation of Agreement:**

It is expected that students, teachers and parents will feel happy in the school environment and safe from all forms of physical, verbal, sexual or emotional abuse from other students or adults. Failure to adhere to the Code of Conduct will result in persons not being able to be part of the volunteer program.

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

- has no more avenues for assistance available;
- fails to follow requirements outlined in the Classroom Helper Policy and elaborated on in Induction Training and informal conversation with the supervising teacher;
- behaves towards students, parents or staff in a manner deemed inappropriate or improper;
- continually fails to meet commitments without notice to the school; or
- fails any condition of the Working With Children Check.

**As part of Our Safe Schools and Visitors Policies all people entering the school must sign in and out at the office. All volunteers in the school must wear identification (volunteer's badge).**

DATE: August 2015

FOR REVIEW: May 2017

**Commented [WD1]:** Will need to ask Michaela to change all the logos on the policies. New LeA logo. Do we need to confirm from LEVNT if it is compulsory to have this logo on our school policy??