



St. Christopher's Child Safe - Volunteer Procedure

Introduction

St Christopher's School seeks to provide a safe, open & nurturing learning environment for all students. The school acknowledges the value that volunteers play in a variety of learning, school based & community activities and actively encourages their participation.

To ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of all students, St Christopher's School maintains a comprehensive process for screening, authorising, instructing and working with volunteers which is outlined in this procedure.

St. Christopher's School takes its commitment to maintaining a 'Child Safe Environment' for all students and young people seriously and implores that all members of the school community, including volunteers, work with them to achieve this end.

Scope

This procedure applies, in general terms to all parents, parent volunteers, members of the Parish Education Board and Parents Association, Parish staff, Parishioners, student teachers or those on work experience placement and any other person, who volunteers their services to the school.

Definition

Volunteer: Any non-paid individual who provides support in educational, sporting, extra curricula or school or parish community activities to the school. Their assistance is provided under the direction & supervision of identified school representatives.

Child Connected Work: 'Work authorised by the school's Principal or members of the Leadership Team; performed by an adult in the school environment while children are present or are reasonably expected to be present'.

Procedure

Any parent, carer, members of the Parish Education Board or Parents Association, Parish staff, parishioners, student teachers, individual on work placement or community service and any other person 18 years or over, who wishes to volunteer their services to the school must ensure that they participate in the following screening and induction process.

Volunteer Pre-Authorisation Screening Requirements:

1. Prior to being considered for authorisation in any voluntary capacity by St. Christopher's School, all potential applicants must hold a current (within 5 years of issue) Working With

Children Check (WWCC). Candidates who do not maintain a current WWCC will not be permitted to conduct voluntary work on behalf of the school.

2. Upon receipt of a copy by the school of a current WWCC, the applicant will be provided with a copy of St. Christopher's School's Child Safety Code of Conduct. The applicant will be required to take their time to read, sign and acknowledge their understanding of the school's expectations and their responsibility to exhibit 'acceptable behaviours' whilst volunteering and conducting 'Child Connected Works' at all times.
3. Upon receipt of an executed copy of the school's, Child Safe Code of Conduct the applicant will be required to provide to the school all relevant contact details including their residential address, telephone/mobile phone contact details and email address.

NOTE: The school may already be in receipt of these details.

Volunteer Attendance & Participation Requirements

4. It is the volunteer's responsibility to remain familiar with the 'acceptable & unacceptable' behaviours outlined in the school's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This may be done by reading a copy previously provided, or by accessing the School Child Safe Code of Conduct via the school website.

All volunteers are reminded that any person suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility outlined in the Code of Conduct will result in immediate action to address the breach. Where deemed appropriate, a breach of this code of conduct may be referred to Victoria Police.

All volunteers also accept that St. Christopher's School may choose to cease individual volunteering arrangements at any time where a volunteer is in breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct or does not adhere to obligations outlined in this Volunteer Procedure.

7. Upon arrival at St. Christopher's all volunteers must acknowledge their attendance by 'signing in' at the school office using the 'Vpass' app. They will then receive a visitor/volunteer lanyard or sticker which must be worn whilst at the school. It is the responsibility of all volunteers to also acknowledge their departure by 'signing out' and returning the lanyard.

Where it is not practical to sign in at the office for volunteer activities such as a Working Bee, it is the responsibility of all volunteers to make their attendance known to a member of the Leadership Team or the supervising staff representative. While the school has a duty of care, parents and volunteers are responsible for their own children during working bees.

8. Upon entering the school site for the purpose of voluntary work, all volunteers must promptly report to the supervising staff member. Volunteers are not permitted to attend any other area of the school without the knowledge of the supervising staff member.
NOTE: Multiple breaches of this essential security requirement may result in the authorisation to the volunteer being revoked.

9. Volunteers are not permitted to:
- I. Work in isolation with a student. The supervising staff member will ensure that students remain in groups or volunteer work will be undertaken in an open and visible environment, in close proximity to a member of staff.
 - II. Treat any member of staff, student, including their own, disrespectfully. This includes the use of inappropriate language, prejudice or oppressive behaviour or expressing personal views on cultures, race, ethnicity, sexuality or disabilities.
 - III. Speak aggressively to a staff member or student, including their own child.
 - IV. Discipline a student, including their own child.
 - V. Disclose with any member of the school community, including their own children, confidential information obtained as a result of participating as a volunteer or in 'Child Connected Works'. (i.e... discussing with others a student's or young person's academic strengths or weaknesses, behaviour, etc).
 - VI. Take photos or videos of students or staff members on their own device whilst volunteering or participating in 'Child Connected Works'.
 - VII. Post any photo, comment or opinion on electronic platforms (social media, internet or email) relating to students, staff members or activities that you have participated in as a volunteer.

If a volunteer has any comments or concerns they are reminded to bring these to the immediate attention of the supervising staff member or alternatively a member of the Leadership Team or Principal.

NOTE: Any volunteer who displays any of the above mentioned behaviours will have their authorisation to volunteer revoked.

Volunteer Screening & Register

To ensure the currency of all authorised volunteers, St. Christopher's School maintains a register of all Working With Child Checks and signed School Child Safety Code of Conduct documents.

All volunteers will receive verbal notification from the school office when their WWCC is close to expiry. However, it is the responsibility of volunteers to ensure their WWCC is current.

NOTE: Failure to maintain these essential security requirements will result in the authorisation to volunteer being revoked.

Relevant Documents

School Child Safety Code of Conduct