



# Makybe Rise Primary School Volunteer Policy

## Purpose

1. To provide clear guidelines for staff and volunteers regarding the involvement of volunteers in activities auspiced by the school.
2. To comply with current legislative requirements in relation to working with children.

## Rationale

Makybe Rise Primary School aims to provide an open, welcoming and safe environment for every person in our school community. We believe that all volunteers provide an important service to our school. They participate in a range of activities including sports coaching and management, assistance with classroom activities, governance, supervision and facilitation of fund raising events. It is important to support the volunteers as well as provide clear guidelines for the conduct of volunteers to ensure that all interaction with students and adults is respectful, honest, confidential, courteous, sensitive, tactful and considerate.

## Definition

A volunteer is an adult who offers services for school activities, but receives no remuneration or reward from the school for the services provided. Volunteers may be parents, guardians, relatives of a student or community members.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer includes:

- A parent of children enrolled at the school.
- A person who does not have a child enrolled at the school and who will be assisting with classroom activities or other school activities.
- Any person who will be assisting with activities such as excursions, sports training or other school events, where they may be required to take responsibility for a small group of children. This may or may not be under the direct supervision of a teacher.

For the purpose of this policy a volunteer does not include the following people/events:

- Guests who are invited by the classroom teacher to provide a brief presentation on a specific topic.
- Relatives/friends who attend the classroom to observe a particular event such as news time or a student talk.
- Visitors in the classroom for brief periods of time, during which the teacher is constantly present.

## Values

Makybe Rise Primary School is a place of learning for students and the rights of the students will be considered first and foremost.

The School is committed to:

- The Four Tribes Agreements - Mutual Respect, Attentive Listening, Right to Pass/Participate and Appreciations.
- The wellbeing of each student having fundamental importance.

- The provision of a safe and secure environment where everyone's contribution is valued and respected.
- Encouraging parents and volunteers to support and participate in the life of the School.
- Ensuring the conduct and communication within the community remains ethical and respectful.

## **Guidelines for Volunteers**

### **General Guidelines**

- All volunteers must ensure that they have the permission of the school to undertake activities at the school.
- Any volunteer, other than a parent, who anticipates having contact with children on 5 or more days in one calendar year must obtain a Working with Children Check prior to commencing. Providing the receipt for application is acceptable until the card is received.
- In accordance with the criminal screening policy, all volunteers should also complete a Confidential Declaration form prior to undertaking volunteer work. Where volunteer work is ongoing, this form should be completed annually. Under some circumstances, the Principal may waive this requirement. This would usually be in the case of special guests invited to the school assembly.
- The School does not condone any contact between volunteers and students other than for the approved activity in which the volunteer is participating.
- Where possible, volunteers should nominate a suitable back up person to conduct their activity in the case of illness or inability to conduct the activity. The replacement volunteer must undertake the same application and screening process as the volunteer.
- If a volunteer is unable to conduct a planned activity they should notify the school as soon as possible so that an approved replacement can be identified or the activity can be cancelled.
- Volunteers must advise the school as soon as possible of any concerns they have regarding the conduct of their duty or the student with whom they are in contact.
- Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child/persons outside of school. Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Principal or one of the Deputy Principals.
- All volunteers/helpers should ensure they have read the information sheet for volunteers.

### **Involvement in Activities**

Under most circumstances, volunteers will undertake activities with a staff member. Activities may only be undertaken without a teaching staff member if:

- The Principal has granted prior approval.
- The person has capacity to do so.
- The person has the appropriate clearance; and
- The volunteer accepts duty of care responsibility.

### **Liability Issues**

Volunteers are protected from liability for community work undertaken at the school if these activities are undertaken in accordance with the school guidelines, are within the scope of the school's community work, and they are undertaken in good faith. Further, they are protected by the Department's public liability and personal accident insurance arrangements with RiskCover whilst acting as a volunteer.

### **Reference Documents**

Department of Education: Duty of Care for Students; June 2007.

Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 (WA).

## **Guidelines for Parents Volunteering**

- Parents are welcomed and invited to be involved in their child's education. All parents who work as volunteers at school will be expected to read and sign a Confidentiality Statement. They will need to respect the confidentiality of staff, students and other parents at all times. All parent/carer volunteers are not to discuss any information they obtain at school with anybody, other than classroom teachers and the Principal or delegate. Any parent/carer not fulfilling these requirements may be excluded from the volunteer program.
- Parents are not required to complete a sign in/out form. In the event of an emergency situation the parent must follow the instructions of the classroom teacher until such time as the emergency is declared over.
- Parents are required to complete a Confidential Declaration form before participating as a volunteer.
- It is recommended that parent volunteers arrange for alternative care for their pre-school child as they can often distract from the normal order of the classroom, thus compromising the learning of the students in the class.