

St Francis Xavier Primary School

Volunteer Procedure Policy

Rationale

St Francis Xavier Primary 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.

St Francis Xavier Primary 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, will work with them to achieve this end.

Purpose:

This Volunteer Procedure Policy applies, in general terms to all parents, members of the School Advisory Council or Parent's Association, student teachers, or individuals on work placement and any other person, who volunteer their services to the school. To ensure the safety, wellbeing and protection of all students, St Francis Xavier Primary School maintains a comprehensive process for screening, authorising, instructing and working with volunteers which is outlined in this procedure.

Definition

Volunteer: Any *non-paid* individual who provides support in educational, sporting, extra curricula or school 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, members of the Leadership Team or teaching staff performed by an adult in the school environment while children are present or are reasonably expected to be present'.

Implementation:

Any parent, members of the School Advisory Committee or Parent's Association, student teachers, individual on work placement and any other person, 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:

Prior to being considered for authorisation in any voluntary capacity by St Francis Xavier Primary School, all potential applicants must hold a current (within 5 years of issue) Working with Children's Check (WWCC). Candidates who do not maintain a current WWCC will not be permitted to conduct voluntary work on behalf of the school.

Upon receipt of a copy by the school of a current WWCC, the applicant will be provided with a copy of the MACS-SFX Child Safety Code of Conduct. The applicant will be required to take their time to read and acknowledge their understanding, via signature, of the school's expectations and their responsibility to exhibit 'acceptable behaviours' whilst volunteering and conducting 'Child Connected Works' at all times.

Upon receipt of an executed copy of the school's MACS-SFX Child Safety 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.

Subsequent to this, the applicant will be provided with a briefing from a member of staff as to exclusion zones and restricted areas where volunteer access is not permitted. These areas include the student toilets. Information pertaining to the school's Emergency Management & DISPLAN requirements will also be provided to the applicant at this time.

Prior to being authorised to volunteer at St Francis Xavier Primary School, applicants must read, complete and acknowledge their understanding via signature of the MACS-SFX Child Safety Code of Conduct and read the MACS-SFX Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Volunteer Attendance & Participation Requirements

It is the volunteer's responsibility to remain familiar with the 'acceptable & unacceptable' behaviours outlined in the MACS-SFX Child Safety Code of Conduct. They may be done by reading a copy previously provided, or by accessing the Child Safety 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 concern. Where deemed appropriate, a breach of this code of conduct may be referred to Victorian Police.

All volunteers also accept that St Francis Xavier Primary School may choose to cease individual volunteering arrangements at any time where a volunteer is in breach of the Child Safety Code of Conduct or does not adhere to obligations outlined in the MACS-SFX Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Upon arrival at St Francis Xavier Primary School all volunteers must acknowledge their attendance by 'signing in' via PassTab. It is the responsibility of all volunteers to also acknowledge their departure by signing out.

Where it is not practical to sign in for volunteer activities such as a Working Bee etc, it is the responsibility of all volunteers to make their attendance known to a member of the Leadership Team or the supervising staff representative. (A sign-up sheet will be provided)

Volunteers are required to wear a school visitor / volunteer lanyard whilst participating as a volunteer or undertaking 'Child Connected Works'. This lanyard must be visible at all times. Staff members are instructed to approach any adult, during school hours, on the school site who is not wearing a visitor / volunteer lanyard. These individuals will be escorted back to the Administration Building where they will be required to sign in.

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 these essential security requirement may result in the authorisation to the volunteer being revoked.

Volunteers are not permitted to:

- 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.
- 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.
- Speak aggressively to a staff member or student, including their own child.
- Discipline students, including their own child.
- Disclose to 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 academic strengths or weaknesses).
- Take photos or videos of students or staff members whilst volunteering or participating in 'Child Connected Works' unless authorised to do so by the Principal and/or Nominee.
- Post any photo, comment or opinion on electronic platforms (social media, internet or email) relating to students, staff members or activities that they 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 Child Safety Officer.

NOTE: Any volunteer who displays any of the abovementioned behaviours or doesn't adhere to SFX Child Safety Policies or Procedures will have their authorisation to volunteer revoked.

Volunteer Screening & Register

To ensure the currency of all authorised volunteers, St Francis Xavier Primary School Office Manager and Database Manager maintain an electronic register including Working with Child Checks and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

All volunteers will receive notification at least four weeks prior to the expiration of Working with Children Checks. It is then the volunteer's responsibility to update their WWC.

Currency of Volunteers

To ensure St Francis Xavier Primary School maintains a safe, open & nurturing learning environment for all students it is a requirement that all volunteers participate in the annual Parent Helper/Child Safety Workshop sign a copy of the Child Safety Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct & complete questionnaire at least annually.

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

Evaluation:

This Policy will be revisited and/or reviewed as part of the School Improvement process or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstance.

Relevant Documents:

This policy supports other St Francis of Xavier Primary school policies and procedures within the Child Safety and Wellbeing Sphere.