

## INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are an integral part of our school. Your participation in the work of the school is greatly appreciated and valued. While the welfare of our students is our highest priority, we want to do everything possible to ensure your involvement is a rewarding experience. The following introductory information is provided to ensure that we exercise our responsibility for the safety of our students, and to strengthen our partnership with you. Volunteers who have close contact with students, eg sports coaches, LAP volunteers, canteen volunteers, and those who assist at camps or similar activities, will receive training and extra information where necessary eg specific skills, safe practices and medical conditions.

### Police Checks

It is a requirement of the Department for Education and Children's Services that volunteers working in school sites undergo a police check. This can be organised through the school at a reduced cost of \$15.00 per person. Information is available from the Front Office.

### Record keeping

The school's administrative staff need to know who is in the school at any one time, especially in case of emergency, so you may be required to "check in" at the front office or with the supervising teacher, and "check out" on your departure. Volunteer badges are available beside the sign-in book.

### Student behaviour

We expect students to treat you with respect and courtesy at all times. If students behave inappropriately, you should tell them that the behaviour is offensive or inappropriate. If the behaviour persists, please seek help from the supervising staff member or senior staff.

### Privacy and confidentiality

Schools must comply with Information Privacy

Principles regarding the use and release of information. Any personal information (including names, addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances or situations of any nature) about students, staff and volunteers that you become aware of during your volunteer work must not be shared, unless it is required by law eg it is relevant for reporting alleged child abuse. Refer all requests for access to files and records to the supervising teacher. Please refrain from making any comments about the use of individual teaching methodologies or student behaviour management methods.

### Conversations with students

Remember that you are acting as a role model to the students who observe you. Your language and topics of conversation should be above reproach.

### Being alone with students

You should be within sight of a member of staff when working alone with an individual student. Do not shut or lock a door so that you are in a room alone with a student. You will not be required to mind a class in the absence of a teacher.

### Toilets

Please use the staff toilets, and do not enter toilets allocated for student use. You will not be required to assist with the toileting of students, nor with sickroom activities.

### First aid

If a student is injured or ill, please advise the supervising teacher or front office as soon as possible. Our first aid officer or other staff member will provide first aid/comfort to an injured or distressed student, and contact parents if necessary.

### Touching students

Please refrain from unnecessarily touching students unless there is a genuine emergency.

### Mandatory Notification of child abuse

Under the Children's Protection Act, 1993, as a volunteer you are obliged by law to notify Family SA if you suspect that a child (under the age of 18) has been abused or neglected. This is done by telephoning the Child Abuse Report Line on 131 478. Failure to notify suspected child abuse or neglect is an offence and carries a maximum penalty of a \$2,500 fine.

If you observe someone who works with children eg teacher, SSO, sports coach, or volunteer, acting in an inappropriate manner, telephone the Child Abuse Report Line. Do not question those involved as this could compromise an investigation. The law does not require that you prove your suspicions, but it does require that you report your suspicions. Consult the principal or member of senior staff for advice if you feel the need.

Definitions of abuse:

#### *Physical Abuse*

"Physical abuse is any physical injury inflicted upon a child."

#### *Sexual Abuse*

"Sexual abuse is any sexual behaviour imposed on a child."

#### *Emotional Abuse*

"Emotional abuse is a chronic attitude or behaviour towards a child which is detrimental to or impairs the child's emotional and/or physical development."

#### *Neglect*

"Neglect refers to any serious omission or commission by a person which jeopardises or impairs the child's physical, intellectual or emotional development."

### Sexual and racist harassment, and bullying

Under the Equal Opportunity Act, 1984, it is unlawful to subject a student, a fellow employee or volunteer worker to sexual or racist harassment.

The principal or senior staff will investigate any reports of sexual or racist harassment or bullying. We also have staff who will maintain confidentiality, listen sympathetically and explain the complaint procedures to you. The staff representatives to contact are the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare staff representative or a member of our Personnel Advisory Committee.

Harassment and bullying consist of acts or behaviours, which are directed against individuals or groups, and which are experienced as insulting, offensive, demeaning, humiliating or intimidating. It can include belittling comments, ridicule, graffiti, name-calling, put-down jokes, and attacks on property, exclusion, and physical violence.

### Occupational Health Safety and Welfare

The school is responsible for providing a safe working environment. You are asked to take reasonable responsibility for your own health and safety, and avoid the possibility of an accident or injury while you are at the school. Special care is needed when lifting heavy objects. Do not be involved in any activity, which is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk. Please familiarise yourself with emergency procedures for evacuation, and report all injuries and accidents occurring whilst at the school, to office staff as soon as possible. Further information is available in the Occupational Health Safety and Welfare Manual, located in the staff room.

### Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in buildings at all, and not on school grounds during school hours.

### Insurance

The Volunteers Protection Act, 2001, protects volunteers from being sued for an act or omission done or made in good faith and without recklessness while carrying out volunteer duties. The Department manages claims for out-of-pocket expenses arising from personal injury sustained by volunteers in schools. Further information is available from the Principals or Department's *Administrative Instructions and Guidelines*.

### Policies and guidelines

A range of policies and documents concerning the school's operations can be found on the Department's web site <http://www.schools.sa.gov.au>, and can be obtained from the front office.

### Training

Information about training offered by the Department can be found on:

[www.tandd.sa.edu.au/tandd](http://www.tandd.sa.edu.au/tandd)

Training in mandatory notification and other matters is provided by the South Australian Association of School Parents' Clubs:

[www.nexus.edu.au/Associations/SAASPC/SAASPC.htm](http://www.nexus.edu.au/Associations/SAASPC/SAASPC.htm)

Other useful sites include:

[www.saasso.asn.au](http://www.saasso.asn.au)

[www.parenting.sa.gov.au](http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au)

[www.napcan.org.au](http://www.napcan.org.au)

*Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Do not hesitate to speak with the Principals or another member of senior staff if you have any concerns or require further information.*

February 2003

# MC DONALD PARK R-7 SCHOOL

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