

Volunteer policy

Volunteers make a significant contribution to our school community by giving their time and sharing skills and expertise with others. There are many benefits to volunteering including learning new skills, meeting new people and being a positive role model for students. Volunteers in department education and early childhood services and settings help to achieve South Australian government objectives. The Volunteering Strategy for South Australia 2014 to 2020 is a cross-sector volunteer agreement supporting the development of volunteerism, as well as working to maintain a high volunteering participation rate in South Australia. The following site based volunteer policy applies to all volunteers working in our school, preschool and out of school hours care and vacation care services.

Leadership will ensure volunteers:

- are recruited using an open and planned approach to attract volunteers with relevant interests, knowledge, skills or attributes, as required by the school or service
- are selected based on interest, knowledge and skills or attributes relevant to the role
- are not discriminated against and that there is equal opportunity for all
- are given relevant information about the education and early childhood service, their role and the recruitment and selection process
- meet screening and suitability requirements as per the department's policies and procedures
- are advised that if their relevant history changes after their appointment – for example if they are charged or convicted of an offence relevant to risk of harm to children – they let the education and early childhood leader know immediately
- meet expected requirements as per the department's child protection in education and early childhood services policy which includes being provided with the Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) for volunteers as a condition of volunteering (see organising RRHAN-EC for volunteers)
- are given the name of the education and early childhood leader who can provide advice and support to them about any child protection or wellbeing concerns
- are introduced to a volunteer contact person at the education and early childhood service or in the volunteer program
- complete and sign the department's volunteer application, declaration and agreement forms
- are given safe, meaningful work in a well-managed workplace
- receive the level of supervision required for them to do their assigned role
- are given ongoing support and feedback about their work
- are given recognition and thanks respectful of cultural values and perspectives
- know they are expected to observe similar ethical, policy and legislative requirements as employees
- are not used where paid employment should be used
- are reimbursed for reasonable out-of-pocket expenses incurred as part of their role
- monitor suitability of volunteers

Leaders will provide volunteers with:

- clearly written role descriptions – if their role changes during the course of their appointment, the education and early childhood leader must take appropriate steps to make sure the volunteer is suitable and able to perform the new duties
- the information, training and resources necessary to enable them to perform their role effectively without creating risks to themselves or to others
- a volunteer agreement with the information needed to make sure they are aware of and understand their obligations to maintain confidentiality and to act in a manner consistent with the principles of conduct for South Australian public sector volunteers (part of the guideline of the commissioner for public sector employment – volunteers)
- an education and early childhood service induction or orientation which includes information about work health and safety requirements relevant to their work
- any RRHAN-EC updates.

Volunteers will:

- make contact with the school to ascertain school needs re volunteers
- attend an interview and complete and sign the department's volunteer application, declaration and agreement forms
- provide documentation of relevant screening checks (working with children check and responding to abuse and neglect), identification and details of referees
- complete online induction requirements and attend a site based induction training
- observe work health and safety requirements and do any training necessary to make sure they will not put their own or anyone else's safety at risk. The principles and practices in the Work Health and Safety Act 2012 are applicable to volunteers
- observe similar ethical, policy and legislative requirements as employees
- follow directions of the education and early childhood leaders
- meet the responsibilities as set out in their signed volunteer agreement
- sign in and out at the front office on arrival and departure (or with Preschool or OSHC staff if volunteering in these services)
- notify the school as early as possible if they are unable to fulfil their volunteer commitment
- go to <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/volunteers> for further information on volunteering

Cancellation of Agreement

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

- has no more suitable work available
- fails to follow requirements outlined in the volunteer policy and elaborated through the induction training
- behaves towards students, parents or staff in a manner deemed inappropriate or improper
- repeatedly fails to meet commitments without notice to the school.

Volunteer Agreement

This volunteer agreement grants permission to _____ (name of volunteer)

to volunteer at _____ (name of centre/preschool/school).

Site responsibilities

We agree to:

- welcome you and value your work
- make sure you meet all of the department's volunteer policy and procedure needs, including that you:
 - know about Department for Education screening and suitability requirements
 - are aware of work health and safety
 - are supervised
- give you an induction
- appoint a contact person to help you
- give you a clearly written role description
- provide you with support and regular feedback about your work performance
- offer training as needed, including Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care
- keep accurate and confidential records of your work and personal details
- provide you with a safe working environment.

Site leader/s name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Volunteer responsibilities

I agree to:

- only do the work in my volunteer role description
- do my volunteer role to the best of my ability
- do any required induction or training
- work under staff supervision
- always think about the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, by:
 - following the Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care requirements
 - immediately reporting to a site leader any concerns I have about a child or young person
 - reporting any suspicion on reasonable grounds of child abuse and neglect to the Child Abuse Report Line
- tell the site as soon as possible if I cannot make it in or need to stop helping out
- follow all Department for Education and SA Government policies and procedures relevant to my role
- comply with the guideline of the commissioner for public sector employment – volunteers
- report any workplace health and safety concerns
- follow legislation and reasonable, lawful directions that relate to my role
- advise the site leader as soon as possible if any information I give is no longer accurate – especially on my working with children check screening application and volunteer application form
- stand by and comply with the expected behaviours for volunteers (listed on the next page)

I understand that if I do not comply with this agreement my permission to volunteer can be withdrawn.

Volunteer's signature _____ Date _____

This agreement can be cancelled by either the site leader or the volunteer at any time.

Expected behaviour for volunteers

When you sign this agreement, you are saying that you will behave as we expect and will stand by our values. These values and expectations are part of the principles of conduct for South Australian Public Sector Volunteers (attachment B) of the [guideline of the commissioner for public sector employment – volunteers](#) and the [Department for Education Wellbeing for Learning and Life framework](#).

Values

- Service – proudly serve the community and government of South Australia.
- Professionalism – strive for excellence.
- Trust – have confidence in the ability of others.
- Respect – value every individual.
- Collaboration and engagement – create solutions together.
- Honesty and integrity – act truthfully, consistently, and fairly.
- Courage and tenacity – never give up.
- Sustainability – work to get the best results for current and future generations of South Australians.

What we expect from you

- When you volunteer with children and young people:
 - make sure the time spent together is positive
 - treat them with dignity, equality and respect
 - give them a chance to speak about the things that affect their care or learning
 - listen to them
 - be aware that their needs and vulnerabilities are specific and can be different because of things like age, language barriers, developmental capabilities, disability, mental health, trauma or abuse
 - make sure they are in a space that is safe and free from obvious hazards.
- Be polite. Respect all people.
- Don't share personal information or talk unnecessarily about children or young people, staff or children's parents or carers. Don't gossip. Think before you talk about other people.
- Avoid making any special relationships with children or young people:
 - make sure there's no favouritism, like gifts or special treatment
 - don't make relationships outside your volunteer role, including personal online social networking, like Facebook and Snapchat, etc.
- Understand that our staff have a broader duty of care for children and young people that can't be delegated or transferred to you.
- Respect the site leader's role as the spokesperson for the school, preschool, or children's centre.
- Be careful about public discussions. Only share official information when authorised by the site leader or required by law.
- Ask for help when needed. Listen to and follow instructions from the site leader.
- Declare any conflicts of interest. Make sure a personal interest doesn't improperly affect your work.
- Don't accept gifts that might influence how you do your work.
- Report unethical workplace behaviour that violates any law, is a danger to children, young people or the environment, or represents corrupt conduct or maladministration.
- Use government and public resources responsibly and appropriately, including equipment and technology.