



Penrith Christian School

Strive for the Highest

Code of Conduct – Volunteer

Policy and Procedure Management

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Audience	Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, Visitors, Students, Board, Staff
Related Policies, Procedures, Work Instructions, Forms or Manuals	• Volunteer Declaration • Volunteer Handbook

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1. Context

Volunteers working with children have greater responsibility and therefore, more is expected of them.

1.1. Introduction

The Office of the Children's Guardian operates under a framework of legislation and is established under the Children's Guardian Act 2019.

The main object of this Act is to protect children by providing for the role and functions of the Office of the Children's Guardian, including:

- promoting the quality of organisations and persons providing services to children, and
- regulating those organisations and persons in providing those services, and
- embedding the Child Safe Standards as the primary framework that guides child safe practice in organisations in New South Wales.

In NSW, child-related organisations are required to implement Child Safe standards through their systems, policies and procedures.

This Code of has been formulated to assist volunteers of Penrith Christian School to understand the type of conduct that is required of them in the way they deal with children whilst undertaking the role of a volunteer. It is also intended to provide practical assistance for volunteers if they encounter ethical problems.

1.2. Key Legislation and Resources

1.2.1 Office of the Children's Guardian

Training and Resources <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources>

Working with Children Legislation <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/our-legislation>

Information for Volunteers <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/employees-and-volunteers>

1.2.2 Kid's Guardian NSW

Child Protection Publications and Resources

<http://www.kidsguardian.nsw.gov.au/Publications>

1.2.3 Information for Volunteers

<https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/employees-and-volunteers>

2 Duty of Care and Legal Liability

Volunteers, when present in the School, are working on behalf of the School and as such are subject to the provisions of certain aspects of Child Protection legislation.

Generally speaking, a person owes a duty not to injure another as a result of his or her own negligent act or omission. The duty does not usually extend to the taking of steps to prevent injury where one has not caused or contributed to the risk-giving rise to the injury.

There exists, however special duty relationships between some members of our society which give rise to more onerous duties of care. The relationship between persons who work, either voluntarily or professionally, on behalf of schools and students, is one of these.

Duty of care applies while the students are under the care of the School. This applies equally to school-based activities and out of school activities. The same duty of care applies to persons who volunteer their services to the School.

Volunteers are required to follow good standards and approved practice, for example compliance with the School's Volunteer Code of Conduct and its Guidelines.

2.1 Duty to Disclose

- 2.1.1 Volunteers are required to report to the Principal any allegation of 'Reportable Conduct' (formerly referred to as child abuse).
- 2.1.2 Volunteers who are the subject of an Apprehended Violence Order or a Reportable Conviction are required to inform the Principal immediately they are in receipt of such an Order or Conviction.
- 2.1.3 Volunteers are subject to the provisions of the Ombudsman Act and allegations made against them by students at the School must be investigated under the guidelines and procedures laid down in this legislation. (Refer to School's Child Protection Policy.)
- 2.1.4 Everyone who is concerned in any capacity with the care and protection of children needs to have a clear understanding of the essential elements of the law as it applies to the care and protection of children.
- 2.1.5 Legislation in NSW relating to the care and protection of children is currently available on the website of the Office of the Children's Guardian <https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/>

3 General Guidelines

Penrith Christian School is committed to striving for the highest standards of education in which the security, protection and comfort of students is a high priority. The following guidelines are to be adopted for the care and protection of students and staff.

3.2 Supervision of Students

- 3.2.1 Volunteers must take all reasonable care to ensure that no student in their care is exposed to any unnecessary risk of injury.
- 3.2.2 Volunteers should be familiar with and adhere strictly to the School's current evacuation procedures. (Appendix 4.)
- 3.2.3 Ill or injured students should be attended to by the supervising staff member. Should additional assistance be required, contact should be made with Student Reception.
- 3.2.4 Volunteers should be alert to bullying, or any other form of discriminatory behaviour, and report incidences to the appropriate staff member.

3.3 Relationships with Students

- 3.3.1 Volunteers should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with one student. Where a volunteer is left with the responsibility of a single student, they should ensure that this is in an open space in view of others. Where this is not possible or practical, it should be discussed with the immediate teacher/supervisor.
- 3.3.2 If volunteers conduct a private conversation with a student, they should consider the time and venue carefully to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable situation. It is preferable to leave the door open. The volunteer should not locate themselves between the student and the door.
- 3.3.3 Volunteers must be cautious of making personal comments about a student and avoid asking questions that probe their own or a student's sexuality or relationships.
- 3.3.4 Volunteers may not have private conversations with students that are of a lewd or sexually suggestive or explicit nature. Comments of this nature, to any student, are also not permitted. Volunteers should not facilitate access to lewd or sexually suggestive material. (See the School's Video Policy and Social Media Policy.)
- 3.3.5 Volunteers should never drive a student alone in their car unless they have specific permission from the School Leadership to do so. Appropriate forms and permissions must be obtained before using private vehicles on excursions. Private vehicles must be comprehensively insured. In the event of an emergency, volunteers should exercise discretion but then report the matter to the appropriate supervisor.
- 3.3.6 Volunteers should notify the Principal or Head of Agency immediately should they suspect a situation involving any form of reportable conduct (formerly referred to as child abuse). It is not the responsibility of volunteers or other teaching staff to investigate. Similarly, volunteers should report to the Principal or Head of Agency any suspected case of neglect.
- 3.3.7 Volunteers should be aware that young people becoming sexually aware may be confused by actions of adults responsible for their care. Volunteers may not court, date or develop a romantic relationship with students enrolled at the School.

Appropriate professional relationships between volunteers/teachers and students must be encouraged at all times.

- 3.3.8 When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching/learning experience caution must be exercised to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Reassurance should always be sought from the student by asking a volunteer to demonstrate a particular activity.
- 3.3.9 Volunteers may from time to time need to assist students with special needs. Attention to the toileting needs of young children should be done with caution and only under the direction of a staff member. It may be appropriate to have the door open or have two adults in attendance. In respect to students with a disability, the management of toileting needs should be included in the student's individual Management Plan.
- 3.3.10 Volunteers should not supply or condone the use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs for any student in their care. Volunteers must not refer to their own views on this as a means of condoning student use.
- 3.3.11 When congratulating a student, a handshake, pat on the shoulder or brief hug are acceptable as long as the student is comfortable with this action. Kissing of students is not acceptable.
- 3.3.12 Assessing a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching. Always advise the student of what you intend doing and seek their concurrence.
- 3.3.13 Volunteers must always treat students with respect and without favouritism. Care should be taken especially when in situations relating to discipline of students. Put-downs or sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity or offensive comments must not be used to demean students.
- 3.3.14 Volunteers are advised not to communicate with students electronically and must abide by the terms of the School's Computer/Internet Policy. The transmission of messages or files which are sexually explicit or offensive are illegal.
- 3.3.15 Sometimes during the course of your voluntary work, you may be in receipt of a gift from a student. In such circumstances, where the receipt of a gift could be considered outside of usual custom or accepted norms, you are to inform your immediate class teacher/supervisor.
- 3.3.16 Volunteers should ensure they are familiar with and adhere to the School's Policy concerning the storage and administration of medical products for students.
- 3.3.17 Sometimes in ensuring duty of care, volunteers may be required to restrain a student from harming him or herself or others using reasonable force. Any such strategy must be within the bounds of what is acceptable and reasonable in order to safely restrain the student/s.

3.4 Discipline of Students

- 3.4.1 As a supervising adult in the School in a voluntary capacity, you carry all necessary authority to ask and expect that children will follow your directions. If you experience

non-compliance or defiant behaviour from students, you should refer this immediately to your supervising teacher.

- 3.4.2 The use of physical forms of punishment (or retaliation) is unacceptable and illegal.
- 3.4.3 Check with the supervising teacher regarding appropriate protocols to deal with discipline in relation to any activity you are supervising.
- 3.4.4 Smoking is not permitted on the School premises. Furthermore, smoking is not permitted at any School function, or activity, whether these functions/activities are on the School premises or not.
- 3.4.5 Alcohol is not to be consumed on the School premises or on School Camps or excursions. The only exceptions will be those occasions deemed appropriate by the Principal, but in any case will not include occasions where students are in attendance.
- 3.4.6 No student should be allowed to leave or be sent from a class alone other than for personal hygiene or administrative matters. In cases where a student must be excluded from a class or activity, students can be sent to the appropriate teacher or Deputy Principal. However, they should not be sent alone and a note detailing the reason for the exclusion should accompany them.
- 3.4.7 At all times, when speaking with students, care must be taken to use appropriate language.

3.5 Communication Issues

- 3.5.1 Volunteers are required to respect and adhere to the established lines of communication in the School. Discriminatory language and hate speech are strictly prohibited.
- 3.5.2 Volunteers should be mindful of confidentiality when in discussion with parents. However, volunteers should be aware that confidentiality can never be guaranteed if the matter under discussion requires mandatory reporting. (Refer to the section about Child Protection.)
- 3.5.3 Volunteers should not speak about staff members or other volunteers to students or parents.
- 3.5.4 Volunteers should dress appropriately, being mindful of WHS, the purpose of the activity, as well as appropriate modesty, consistent with the dress expectations of staff and students.
- 3.5.5 Volunteers should present a courteous, professional manner to students, parents, visitors and other staff members and volunteers. Confrontation and criticism in public is to be avoided at all times.
- 3.5.6 In their carrying out of work at the School, volunteers may from time to time become privy to confidential or private information. All matters of this nature, or matters discussed in staff meetings and staff correspondence, are to be treated confidentially and not discussed with students or other volunteers or parents.

- 3.5.7 The media should not be given access to students or allowed entry to the School without the expressed permission of the Principal.
- 3.5.8 Video or photographs of school activities for private use may only be allowed by prior written consent from the Principal.

3.6 Camps/Excursions

- 3.6.1 Volunteers attending School Camps and Excursions must provide a Working with Children Check number.
- 3.6.2 Students on camps/excursions should have access to supervising staff. The overriding principle is 'to act in the best interests of the child'. If the child expresses discomfort or unease, the child should be removed from the situation immediately.
- 3.6.3 Parents of students attending camps/excursions must complete Consent forms and Medical Information forms.
- 3.6.4 Refer to the supervising teacher for protocols regarding communication, supervision or discipline for the activity you are helping with.