



Last modified: 9 June 2022

Sathya Sai College

VOLUNTEERS & PARENT HELPERS POLICY

Purpose

This statement has been developed to ensure that the school community is aware of the conditions and procedures regarding volunteers and/or parent helpers at Sathya Sai College.

Rationale

Throughout the school year teachers need volunteers to assist in classrooms, at special events, on excursions and around the school in many facets of education. A register for volunteers is maintained at the School office. Volunteers bring in their expertise and add significantly to the human resources available to a school, and subsequently they deserve encouragement, effective management, support and recognition.

Aims:

- To provide a safe and secure environment for our students, staff and resources.
- To maximise the number and variety of effective volunteers who contribute to our school.
- To ensure volunteers carry out tasks in a manner consistent with school expectations, including maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential working environment.

Key Policy Statements

Parents and other volunteers assisting with activities do so on the understanding that:

- The teacher(s) is/are responsible for the programs operating within the classroom and/or school.
- The teacher(s) in charge has ultimate responsibility for the safety, welfare and care of the students.
- Their conduct and manners should at all times be acceptable and an appropriate model for students.
- They should refrain from smoking in the presence or sight of students
- They should not consume or have consumed alcohol prior to working with children.
- They should co-operate with teachers in charge to ensure safety and welfare of students.

- They should sign themselves in and out of the Visitor's Register folder at the Admin Office when participating in school activities.
- They wear the School's 'Volunteer' badge as identification whilst assisting with students.
- Under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* it is necessary for the school to have volunteers who assist students undergo a *Prohibited Employment/Criminal Record* check. The Working with Children Check Guidelines and Forms are available from the Office of the Children's Guardian [Home | Office of the Children's Guardian \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://www.childrensguardian.nsw.gov.au)
- The Principal reserves the right, and has the authority to prohibit any potential visitor from entering or remaining within the school, and also has the authority to invite or exclude people from using or being within the school boundaries outside school operating hours.
- The school's emergency management procedures will ensure that visitors within the school at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and be appropriately catered for.
- Volunteers are expected to be aware of the School's lockdown and evacuation procedure and also the location of the first aid facilities.
- Volunteers are expected to understand the inherent risks of volunteering with Sathya Sai College. Further, volunteers hereby waive any claims against, indemnify, and hold harmless Sathya Sai College, its respective officers, employees, representatives and volunteers from any and all liability, including legal fees that may result from illness, personal injury, property damage or wrong doing resulting from their involvement with the School.
- ***Confidentiality is of prime concern. Parents and volunteers are not to discuss any information, concerning students or staff they obtain at school with anybody, other than the classroom teacher or the Principal.***

Any parent or volunteer not fulfilling the above requirements may be excluded from the volunteer program.

Excursions

In the first instance, parents who are registered helpers/volunteers will be offered places on any excursion where parent helpers are deemed necessary as part of the risk assessment of that activity. Should additional helpers be required class teachers will negotiate places with available parents.

Training

Parent helpers may be offered training by teaching staff which will assist helpers to conduct individual programs in areas such as reading and mathematics.

Working With Children Check

All volunteers must have a valid NSW Working With Children Check (WWCC) to be eligible to volunteer at any school events, activities or functions. Both the free and paid WWCC are valid for use by volunteers at the school.

CODE OF CONDUCT

PREFACE

Volunteers are a valuable part of the School community and volunteer work assists us to provide an extensive and rich educational program. The nature of volunteer work at the school, often involving work and interaction with children, means that there are a range of obligations and responsibilities which must be undertaken by volunteers.

INTENDED USE

This Code of Conduct is intended to be made available to the school's volunteers at the commencement of their role (e.g. preferably around induction and training) and it is to be available and/or provided to volunteers during the course of their involvement with the school.

The Code forms comprehensive directions to these volunteers as to the expected standard of behaviour.

This Code is intended to apply to volunteers in their work with the school.

Aim of Code of Conduct

This *Code of Conduct* applies to all volunteers at the School.

The aim of this *Code* is to outline the standards of behaviour expected of all volunteers of the School.

This *Code* does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of your work. Instead, it sets out general expectations of the standards of behaviour required.

The *Code* places an obligation on all volunteers to take responsibility for their own conduct and to work with colleagues cooperatively to achieve a consultative and collaborative workplace where people are happy and proud to work.

Who has to comply with the Code of Conduct?

By accepting a volunteering role with the School, you must be aware of and comply with this *Code*.

Therefore, you must:

- (a) conduct yourself, both personally and professionally in a manner that upholds the ethos and reputation of the School;
- (b) comply with the School's policies and procedures;
- (c) act ethically and responsibly; and
- (d) be accountable for your actions and decisions.

Conduct that is not consistent with the conduct set out in this *Code* may result in the engagement of a contractor, consultant or volunteer being terminated.

General

This *Code* is not intended to be contractual in nature and does not impose any contractual obligations on the School. The School reserves the right at its sole discretion to vary or cancel this Code at any time.

1. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AS A VOLUNTEER?

As a volunteer, you should be aware of the School's policies and procedures, particularly those that apply to your role. Many of these are available online; others may be made available to you through induction programs or on request.

If you are uncertain about the scope or content of a policy with which you must comply, you should seek clarification from Principal or supervisor.

You should also be familiar with the legislation under which you are employed as this may specify requirements with which you need to comply.

As a School volunteer, you are expected to:

- (a) Perform your duties to the best of your ability and be accountable for your performance;
- (b) Follow reasonable instructions given by your supervisor or their delegate;
- (c) Comply with lawful directions;
- (d) Be courteous and responsive in dealing with your staff, students, parents and members of the public;
- (e) Work collaboratively with your staff and your colleagues; and
- (f) Ensure that your conduct is consistent with the ethos of the School and does not damage the reputation of the School.

2. WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREACH THE CODE OF CONDUCT?

As a School volunteer, you hold a position of trust and are accountable for your actions.

- 2.1 The consequences of inappropriate behaviour and breaches of this *Code* will depend on the nature of the breach.
- 2.2 Actions that may be taken by the School in respect of a breach of the Code include management or remedial action, training or disciplinary action ranging from a warning to termination of volunteer role. The school will reserve the right to determine in its entirety the response to any breach of this Code.

3. REQUIRED REPORTING

Volunteers are required to report certain information to the School.

- 3.1 All volunteers are required to inform the **Principal** if they are charged with or convicted of a serious offence (those punishable by 12 months or more in jail). You must also inform the Principal if you become the subject of an Apprehended Violence Order.
- 3.2 If, through your volunteer role with the School, you become aware of a serious crime committed by another person, you are required to report it to the **Principal**, who may be required to inform the police.
- 3.3 As a School Volunteer, you must report to the Principal:
 - (a) Any concerns that you may have about the safety, welfare and well being of a child or young person;
 - (b) Any concerns you may have about the inappropriate actions of any other staff member, contractor or volunteer that involves children or young people;
 - (c) Any concerns you may have about any other staff member, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' that has been made to you; and
 - (d) If you become aware that a staff member, contractor or volunteer has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving 'reportable conduct'; and
 - (e) If you become the subject of allegations of 'reportable conduct' whether or not they relate to your role in the School.

You should refer to the School's *Child Protection Policy* for further information about these obligations.

4. RESPECT FOR PEOPLE

The School expects volunteers to treat everyone with respect and courtesy. Our daily interaction with others reflects on the School's reputation.

- 4.1 Volunteers who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students. Modelling effective leadership and respect in your interactions with students can have a profoundly positive influence on a student's personal and social development.
- 4.2 Similarly, it is important for you to treat your colleagues, staff members, contractors, students and parents with respect. Rude or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening, intimidating or derogatory language and physical abuse or intimidation towards other employees, contractors, students and parents is unacceptable. You must not use information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phones, text or instant messaging, blogs, social media sites and other websites to engage in this type of behaviour.
- 4.3 You must not discriminate against, or harass for any unlawful reason, or bully for any reason any staff member, contractor, student or parent. Your obligations in this regard, including the list of unlawful reasons, are set out in the School's ***Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy***. Unlawful harassment or discrimination may constitute an offence under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1977* or federal discrimination legislation. Bullying may be a breach of your obligations under work health and safety legislation or your duty of care at common law.
- 4.4 You should ensure that you are aware of the School's policy on ***Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying***. If you believe you are being unlawfully harassed or discriminated against or bullied:
 - (a) Where you feel comfortable ask the person to stop, or make it clear that you find the behaviour offensive or unwelcome. It may be useful to speak with your in the first instance to seek guidance on how to do this; and/or
 - (b) Raise the issue as a grievance in accordance with the School's ***Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy*** as soon as possible after the incident(s) have occurred.
- 4.5 The School takes reports of unlawful discrimination and harassment or bullying seriously and will consider action it considers appropriate if such conduct is found to have occurred

including disciplining or dismissing offenders. Many incidents can be addressed effectively if reported early.

- 4.6 If you lie about or exaggerate a complaint, the School will view this as a very serious matter, and you may be asked not to continue in your volunteer role.

5. DUTY OF CARE AND WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY

As a School volunteer, you have a duty of care to students in your charge to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted.

The duty encompasses a wide range of matters, including (but not limited to):

- the provision of adequate supervision
- ensuring grounds, premises and equipment are safe for students' use
- implementing strategies to prevent bullying from occurring in School, and
- providing medical assistance (if competent to do so), or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to aid a student who is injured or becomes

- 5.1 As a School volunteer, you have a duty of care to students in your charge. That duty is to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted. For example, risks from known hazards and from foreseeable risk situations against which preventative measures can be taken. The standard of care that is required, for example the degree of supervision, needs to be commensurate with the students' maturity and ability.
- 5.2 Duty of care to students applies during all activities and functions conducted or arranged by the School. The risks associated with any activity need to be assessed and managed before the activity is undertaken. This Risk Assessment will be conducted by the supervising teacher/staff member. You should familiarise yourself with Risk Assessments which have been conducted for any activity in which you are involved.

Work health and safety

- 5.3 You also have a responsibility under work health and safety legislation to take care of your own health and safety at work whilst in a volunteer role. It is also your responsibility to ensure that your activities do not place at risk the health and safety of staff, students or other persons that you may come into contact with at work.
- 5.4 Considerations of safety relate to both physical and psychological wellbeing of individuals.
- 5.5 You should ensure that you are aware of and the School's *Work Health & Safety Statement*.

Supervision of students

- 5.6 You should take all reasonable steps to ensure that no student is exposed to any unnecessary risk of injury.
- 5.7 You should be familiar with and comply with the School's evacuation procedures.
- 5.8 You should be alert to bullying or any other form of discriminatory behaviour, and report incidents to the appropriate staff member. Additional detail about student bullying is set out in the *Child Protection policy*
- 5.9 Ill or injured students should be attended to by the supervising staff member. Should additional assistance be required you should contact *School office*.
- 5.10 You should ensure that you understand and comply with the School's policy in regard to the storage and administration of prescribed medication to students (see *medical treatment for student policy and guidelines dealing with medication*).

6. PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS

As a School volunteer, you are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. You must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

While not all volunteers are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all School volunteers to understand and observe the School's

Supervision of students

- 6.1 You should avoid situations where you are alone in an enclosed space with a student. Where you are left with the responsibility of a single student you 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 your supervisor and/or the Principal.
- 6.2 You should never drive a student in your car unless you have specific permission from your supervisor and/or the Principal to do so. In the event of an emergency you should exercise discretion but then report the matter to your supervisor.
- 6.3 If you wish to conduct a private conversation with a student you should consider the time and venue carefully to avoid placing yourselves in a vulnerable situation. It is preferable to leave the door open. You should not locate yourself between the student and the door.
- 6.4 When confiscating personal items, such as mobile phones or hats, ask students to hand them to you. Only take items directly from students in circumstances where concern exists for the safety of the student or others and your own safety is not jeopardised by this action.

Physical contact with students

- 6.5 You must not impose physical punishment on a student in the course of your volunteer duties.
- 6.6 When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the volunteer/learning experience you must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. You should seek reassurance from the student by asking for a student if necessary to demonstrate a particular activity.
- 6.7 Attention to the toileting needs of young children should be done with caution. It may be appropriate to have the door open. For students with a disability the management of toileting needs should be included in the student's individual management plan.

- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 Assessing a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching the student. Always advise the student of what you intend doing and seek their consent.
- 6.10 Sometimes in ensuring duty of care you may be required to restrain a student from harming him or herself or others using reasonable force. Any such strategy must be in keeping with the School's behaviour management practices or individual student management plans. Your supervising teacher should have this information. You should report and document any such incidents.

Relationships with students

- 6.11 You must not have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student. It is irrelevant whether the relationship is homosexual or heterosexual, consensual or non-consensual or condoned by parents or caregivers. You are reminded of:
- (a) The law prohibiting sexual relations with a person under the age of consent (16 years); and
 - (b) The law prohibiting sexual relations between a teacher and their student under the age of 18 years.
- 6.12 You must not develop a relationship with any student (other than your own child) that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student. An overly familiar relationship with any student (including any adult student) that you are responsible for supervising, tutoring, advising, assessing, or for whom you provide pastoral or welfare support raises serious questions of conflict of interest, trust, confidence, dependency, and of equality of treatment. Such relationships may also have a negative impact on the teaching and learning environment for other students and staff, and may carry a serious reputational risk for the School.
- 6.13 If you consider that a student is being overly familiar, seeking to establish a personal relationship with you or has developed a 'crush' on you, you should report your concerns to your supervisor and/or the Principal as soon as possible so that a plan can be developed to manage the situation effectively and sensitively.
- 6.14 At all times when speaking with students care must be taken to use appropriate language. You must always treat students with respect and without favouritism. There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity or offensive comments.

6.15 You may, as part of your pastoral care role, engage in discussion with students. This is entirely appropriate. However you must be cautious about making personal comments about a student or asking questions that probe your own or a student's sexuality or relationships. You must not hold conversations with a student of an intimately personal nature where you disclose information about yourself.

6.16 You must not:

- (a) Invite students to your home;
- (b) Visit students at their home; or

Unless you have the express permission of their parents and care giver or you are doing so as a normal part of your parent relationship to your child.

6.17 You should be aware of, and sensitive to, children with culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds and cultural practices that may influence the interpretation of your behaviour.

Child protection

6.18 You must be aware of and comply with the School's *Child Protection Policy*.

6.19 As set out in **Section 3** you must report any concerns you may have about any staff member, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' that has been made to you to the Principal. This includes self disclosure if the allegation involves you.

6.20 Broadly, 'reportable conduct' includes:

- (a) Any sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, committed against, with, or in the presence of, a child (including a child pornography offence); or
- (b) Any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; or
- (c) Any behaviour that causes psychological harm to a child,

Whether or not the child consents.

6.21 Reportable conduct does not extend to:

- (a) conduct that is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards, or

- (b) the use of physical force that, in all the circumstances, is trivial or negligible, but only if the matter is to be investigated and the result of the investigation recorded under workplace employment procedures; or
- (c) conduct that is exempted from notification by a Class or Kind Agreement¹.

6.22 For further information about 'reportable conduct' see the School's *Child Protection Policy*.

7. APPROPRIATE USE OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

By its nature, electronic communication is a fast and informal way of communicating. However, once a document or image has been sent there is no way to recall it and it exists forever. Be mindful of this when using this as a means of communicating.

7.1 **You must never use the School's networks to view, upload, download or circulate any of the following materials:**

- (a) sexually related or pornographic messages or material;
- (b) violent or hate-related messages or material;
- (c) racist or other offensive messages aimed at a particular group or individual;
- (d) malicious, libellous or slanderous messages or material; or
- (e) subversive **or other messages or material related to illegal activities.**

8. USE OF ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND TOBACCO

Work Health and Safety is of fundamental importance to the School. Maintaining a safe work environment requires everyone's continuous cooperation.

- 8.1 You are responsible for ensuring your capacity to perform your volunteer duties is not impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs and that the use of such substances does not put at risk you or any other person's health and safety.
- 8.2 As a School volunteer, you must:
- (a) Not attend work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances;
 - (b) Not consume alcohol, illegal drugs or non-prescribed and/or restricted substances while at School;
 - (c) Notify your supervisor if you are aware that your work performance or conduct could be adversely affected as a result of the effect of a prescribed drug;
 - (d) Take action to resolve any alcohol or other drug-related problems that you have; and
 - (e) Consult with your supervisor or Principal if you are concerned about working with other volunteers or staff who may be affected by drugs or alcohol.

Drugs

- 8.3 As a School volunteer, you must not:
- (a) Have illegal drugs in your possession while at School premises. Any illegal drugs found on School property or in the possession of any person on School property may result in disciplinary action including the termination of your volunteer position and referral to the Police;
 - (b) Give students or other volunteers or staff illegal drugs or restricted substances, or encourage or condone their use; and
 - (c) Supply or administer prescription or non-prescription drugs to students unless authorised to do so.

Alcohol

- 8.4 You must not, whilst volunteering, take alcohol to School or consume it during School hours or at any School function at any time School students are present, including those events conducted outside School premises unless expressly permitted to do so by the

Principal. A School function is any occasion organised by the School and/or in the School's name, including dances, farewells, excursions, sporting fixtures and fund raising events.

8.5 You must not:

- (a) Purchase alcohol for, or give alcohol to, any School student (or to any other person under the age of 18 years); and
- (b) Encourage or condone the use of alcohol by students of any age during educational activities.

Tobacco

8.6 You must not smoke or permit smoking in any School buildings, enclosed area or on School grounds. This includes all buildings, gardens, sports fields, cars and car parks.

8.7 You must not purchase tobacco or tobacco products for any School student, or give them tobacco or tobacco products.

9. COMMUNICATION AND PROTECTING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Communication

- 9.1 You should not disclose personal information about other volunteers or staff member to students or parents or discuss their work performance, except if authorised by the Principal in the context of grievance resolution.

Confidential information

- 9.2 As a School volunteer, you must only use confidential information for the work-related purpose it was intended.
- 9.3 Unless authorised to do so by legislation, you must not disclose or use any confidential information without **the express permission of the Principal**.
- 9.4 You must make sure that confidential information, in any form, cannot be accessed by unauthorised people.

Privacy

- 9.5 You should always exercise caution and sound judgment in discussing the personal information of students, parents, staff and other people with other School volunteers or staff members. Normally information should be limited to those who need to know in order to conduct their duties, or to those who can assist in carrying out the School's work because of their expertise.

VOLUNTEERS DECLARATION

I have read, understood and agree to comply with the terms and conditions of the Sathya Sai College Volunteers Policy and the code of conduct.

I understand that the school has the right and may request a criminal records check on me.

First Name: Family Name:

Driving Licence Number:

Telephone Home: Work: Mobile:

Address: Postcode:

Current First Aid:

Any parent or volunteer worker willing to drive students to events must provide evidence of a:

- a) Valid driver's licence and
- b) Current comprehensive car insurance policy.

Name (please print):

Signature: Date.....

Checklist: (please tick)

- NSW Working With Children Check – Volunteer/Student Worker Declaration
- Valid driver's licence
- Current comprehensive car insurance policy