



Volunteers Policy

Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person. This policy should be read in the context of the College Child Protection and Safety Policy.

Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students.

Rationale

St Patrick's College recognises that families are the primary educators of their children and that the College's role is to work with families to provide an authentic Catholic education for boys in line with the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. Catholic education by nature is community based, bringing together a range of stakeholders to provide education for boys that seek to share and live out the word of God in all areas of life. As such the College recognises the integral role that volunteers within the College play and actively seeks to develop structures and procedures that encourage members of the College community (parents, Old Collegians, past parents, friends of the College and other community representatives) to become actively involved in the life of the College.

These involvements are underpinned by the acknowledgement that they are done in the best interest of the boys. The College also recognises that it has legal obligations to all volunteers and to all students who may have direct or indirect dealings with volunteers. The College is also committed to recognising and rewarding the work of volunteers and to developing a culture of volunteerism where all members of the community feel welcomed and supported in giving of their time and energy to improve the educational opportunities provided to students at the College.

This policy **must** be read in conjunction with the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Scope

This policy applies to all St Patrick's College staff, volunteers, and School Advisory Council members. This policy applies to all College activities during and outside of school hours. This includes College activities that are occurring on school campus, offsite, online, extracurricular, sport activities and programs, excursions, camps, interstate, and overseas travel.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

St Patrick's College is committed to providing a safe and child-friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe and can actively participate in decisions that affect their lives. At St Patrick's College, we have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. St Patrick's College regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child-safe culture.



Purpose

The College recognises the value that volunteers bring to its programs and services and seeks to provide a rewarding personal experience for all volunteers. The College appreciates that these services are provided for no financial reward and, in many cases, realise considerable cost and time savings for the College. The College acknowledges its legal obligation to volunteers to provide a safe and enjoyable work environment in line with all relevant legislation. The recognition of volunteers is central to the College's mission and strategic foundations:

This Policy provides a framework for child safety protection, procedure and guidelines for volunteers and compliance with all laws, regulations, and standards.

School Advisory Council

For the purpose of this policy, members of our School Advisory Council who conduct these roles in a volunteer capacity are deemed as staff in the application of our policy documents given the activities, accountabilities, and duties they hold in their representative and governing authority roles. We would request the training and certification levels applicable to staff.

Volunteer Approval and Capture

We require all indirect volunteers to sign in to the College using our visitor sign in system. This will ensure they provide, and we validate their working with children card, they acknowledge our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our emergency evacuation procedures. We request they are accompanied at all times by St Patrick's College staff while they are delivering their volunteer services.

Attending On-Campus

Whilst we actively encourage an inviting and open school, the safety of our students, staff, volunteers, and resources remains our highest priority. All visitors and volunteers who are not St Patrick's College staff members, students, parent, and carers are required to sign in and provide their current WWCC as required under the Working with Children Act 2005. Parents attending the school on parent business are not required to sign in however if they are undertaking volunteer duties, we request they sign in to acknowledge our child safety requirements, provide WWCC and workplace safety policy and procedures.

Policy

The College values and encourages the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate programs and activities.

Guidelines

Volunteers will receive the same legal protection as paid workers in terms of Occupational Health Safety and Welfare and Equal Opportunity and therefore will be accorded the same rights and have the same expectations as paid employees under this legislation, except for the payment of wages. The College will ensure that their Public Liability insurance cover applies to the potential liability for the negligence of volunteers.



Reception Sign-In

The St Patrick's College administration buildings have signage welcoming visitors and directing them to the main Reception area where the reception desk is resourced with reception staff during school opening hours.

All volunteers will be required to make their way to the reception desk and sign-in when attending St Patrick's College must sign in on our iPad system. The sign in system at each reception desk requires a WWCC number to be entered, who they are visiting, and an ID card will be provided and record of their visit captured on the software. The sign-in system will also ask the visitor/volunteer to read, acknowledge, and sign off on our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our emergency management procedures. It will only ask for this to occur on their first sign in and then annually or if any changes are made, it will keep a record of their details including their WWCC if they are a repeat volunteer to our school. This meets our requirements to maintain a volunteer and visitor sign in register. Each year or earlier if their WWCC expires or our policy changes, they will be asked to provide these details and acknowledgements again. The monitoring of our WWCC register for volunteers by the Risk and Compliance Officer will also follow up the volunteer if their card is due to expire or has expired.

All visitors and volunteers between the hours of 9am and 5pm, will be required to report to the St Patrick's College reception desk of the campus they will be visiting prior to undertaking any activity within the school, and sign-in. We also request that parent volunteers / helpers attend and sign in at the reception desk to assist with us being aware of your attendance and location in the event of an emergency.

Working with Children Check (WWCC)

If the WWCC provided by a visitor or volunteer has expired, or if the number doesn't match the name, an alert will pop up on the system and they will be prompted to review the details and provide a valid check. If unable to provide a valid WWCC, the visitor/volunteer will be asked to leave the premises. This will be actioned by the Risk and Compliance Officer and any issues that may arise will be escalated to the relevant member of the College Leadership team, Compliance & Risk Manager or Director of Human Resources.

The system permits exceptions for interstate and overseas visitors, police and worksafe investigators who may provide alternative identification and Leadership, Risk & Compliance Manager or Director of HR can review their identification and approve their entry.

Personal details and WWCC information are stored in the database, where it may be accessed and reviewed as required. The visitor/volunteer will then be assigned a 'Visitor's Pass' which is to be displayed on an item of clothing and worn at all times while on the school premise. Similarly, visitors will be required to report to the administration office at the end of their visit to sign out.

Approved visitors and volunteers will be escorted from the administration office to their destination by a College staff member. The above-mentioned process for managing and monitoring visitors and volunteers will be regularly published in St Patrick's College newsletter and individuals St Patrick's College who have failed to follow this process will be reminded to do so. A map of St Patrick's College will also be maintained, published on St Patrick's College website, and available on the intranet clearly showing the location of St Patrick's College buildings on all campuses, and shared facilities to guide all visitors.

St Patrick's College reserves the right and has the authority to prohibit any potential visitor from entering or remaining within St Patrick's College grounds, and has the authority to invite or exclude people from using or being within St Patrick's College boundaries outside operating hours.



Managing Volunteers Child Safety

A volunteer is expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the Principal. This will include the requirement to agree and abide by St Patrick's College Child Protection and Safety Policy, EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct and our emergency management procedures.

Volunteers will be inducted and supervised by a College staff member. A duty of care is held by volunteers when in the presence of a student at St Patrick's College, and it is important that they should be fully briefed on our Child Safety policies, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and our emergency management procedures.

If it is found that a volunteer poses a risk of child sexual abuse to a student of St Patrick's College, the Principal holds the discretion and will immediately remove the volunteer from the child-related work pending investigation.

The volunteer where possible must be accompanied and supervised all times and not to be left alone with students at any stage.

Volunteer Safety

Under OHS legislation, St Patrick's College is responsible for the health and safety of visitors and volunteers while they are carrying out activities authorised by St Patrick's College:

This includes:

- Activities involving volunteers will be subject to the same process of risk assessment and management undertaken in relation to activities involving employees;
- St Patrick's College will take all reasonable steps to eliminate or minimise the risks to health and safety which volunteers may be exposed;
- Volunteers will not be expected to take primary responsibilities for activities with significant foreseeable risks.
- Volunteers will be provided with safety inductions covering identified hazards, safe work procedures, emergency procedures including first aid, and procedures for notifying school of hazards, incidents and injuries;
- Volunteers will be provided with the appropriate training and protective personal equipment;
- A nominated supervisor for each volunteer, as the main contact point for guidance, queries, and feedback; and
- Suitable insurance will be arranged to cover volunteers in case of injury while assisting St Patrick's College.

St Patrick's College' emergency management procedures will ensure that visitors and volunteers who are on School grounds at the time of any emergency or practice drill will be recognised and be appropriately catered for, using information stored in the database.

Policy Breach

A breach of this policy or procedure may lead to disciplinary action which is outlined further in our:

- Consequence and Breach Policy

All breaches, near misses and risks related to this policy should be reported to either the Principal, Deputy Principal and Risk and Compliance Manager.



Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Principal, Deputy Principal and Risk and Compliance Manager and this may include independent audits and reviews.

Policy Compliance

Compliance with this policy will be monitored by the Risk and Compliance Manager/Officer, and this may include independent audits and reviews.

In implementing this policy, the following should be noted:

1. Volunteer is defined as a person who undertakes activities without monetary reward and of their own free will. They undertake activities that are of benefit to the College and the local community. Volunteers undertake activities that complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff and may be utilised to perform activities that extend and enhance services provided by the College.
2. Volunteers can expect clear delineation of their duties, responsibilities and working environment and will be provided with up-to-date Role Descriptions which clearly set out their duties, time commitment, responsibilities and reporting requirements.
3. Volunteers will be provided with induction and orientation which outline the College's operations, policies, and safety requirements.
4. In designated programs or where required by Government legislation, a volunteer must complete a satisfactory Working with Children Check prior to commencing their volunteer placement.
5. The College shall maintain the right to both refuse a volunteer placement or to end a placement if:
 - a) there is an actual or perceived risk to the student's or volunteer's health or welfare.
 - b) suitable volunteer duties are not available or are no longer available.
 - c) the volunteer does not comply with the College's policies and procedures.
6. Appropriate insurance cover is provided for volunteers who are identified as registered volunteers of the College whilst working in clearly defined activities which are approved and controlled by the College. A registry of all volunteers working on behalf of the College will be maintained by the Risk & Compliance Manager in liaison with relevant department representatives.
7. The College will actively seek to recognise and reward volunteers in non-financial ways which highlight the College's appreciation of the significant contribution volunteers make to enhancing the educational opportunities afforded to students. Such recognition may take the form of listing in College communications, hospitality, certificates of dedicated volunteer functions for example.
8. Rights of Volunteers:
 - a) To be treated respectfully and be valued as an important member of the College community.
 - b) To receive on-going support and direction from a nominated supervisor.
 - c) To work in a safe environment.
 - d) To have complaints or grievances addressed by the College's Deputy Headmaster(s) and/or Business Manager.
 - e) To be able to decline or withdraw from work if it is not suitable or is placing excessive demands on a volunteer.



9. Responsibilities of Volunteers

- a) At all times when working as a volunteer on behalf of the College, volunteers should model behaviour consistent with the Catholic ethos of the College. Volunteers through their actions, words or conduct should not be seen to engage in behaviour that is contrary to the Catholic teachings of the College.
- b) To become familiar with, and work within the appropriate policies and procedures of the College.
- c) To become familiar with, and work within the EREA Code of Conduct and the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- d) Respect and maintain confidentiality of confidential information.
- e) Participate in relevant training and development.
- f) Perform responsibilities as defined in the volunteer's Role Description.
- g) Work within a team structure and accept any direction and supervision from appropriate paid staff.
- h) Inform a college staff member if they are unable to attend their volunteer role at any time.
- i) Work in a safe manner and not put others at risk.

10. Volunteers Register

- a) All details of Volunteers of the college will be listed on the College Volunteer Register and checked annually.
- b) Only Volunteers listed on the College Volunteers Register may perform duties at the College.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION

- St Patrick's College Child Protection and Safety Policy
- EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct
- St Patrick's College Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures
- St Patrick's College Emergency Management Plans
- St Patrick's College Working with Children Check (WWCC) Procedure

Related Legislative Instruments

The following legislation, standards and regulations apply, and this policy aligns with these mandated requirements:

- Ministerial Order 870;
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic);
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic);

Status of Policy

This policy has been developed by St Patrick's College on the 27/11/2019.

Date of Policy Rectification: 19/10/2021-Completed by: Amber Henderson-Risk and Compliance Manager.

Principal Approval for Rectification: Signed by Principal: Steven O'Connor Date: 27/10/2021

Status of Policy: In Draft Awaiting Approval from the EREA Board



VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

Name of Volunteer: _____

Tasks planned to be undertaken (detailed description):

Direct Supervisor: _____

Requestor: _____

Duration start and end date: _____

Days / Hours planned: _____

School Policy Requirements:

- The volunteer must be where possible accompanied and supervised all times and not to be left alone with students at any stage.
- Current Working with Children Check to be provided and validated prior to commencement.
- Daily sign in at reception as a visitor with visitor pass showing at all times.
- Attend an induction/emergency briefing and sign and acknowledge the Child Safety Code of Conduct. This may occur on sign in at St Patrick’s College.

Volunteer Acknowledgment:

I acknowledge and understand the requirements of volunteering at St Patrick’s College

I undertake the tasks as outlined as a volunteer

Signature:

Date:

We thank you for volunteering at St Patrick’s College and greatly appreciate your assistance. We thank you for supporting our commitment to the safety of our children.

Approval by:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Office use only:

- WWCC Validated by: _____ on _____ (date)
- Updated by: _____ on _____ (date)

- Type of induction: Emergency Only (short term) Child safety code of conduct sign off
- Anaphylaxis briefing where food handling Mandatory reporting / PROTECT – long term and direct contact