



Volunteers Policy

March 2014

Rationale

This policy aims to ensure that the work of volunteers at the Ardtornish Children's Centre is safe, significant, fulfilling, and appreciated. We respect volunteers as an important part of the Ardtornish campus community which is enriched through the sharing of their skills and expertise. We encourage their participation in all aspects of community development and the links they bring to the wider community.

This policy also serves to maximise the safety and protection of volunteers, children, and young people in DECD sites and to ensure volunteer management practices meet legislative and South Australian Government policy requirements.

Volunteer Selection Procedures

Volunteers will be assessed for their suitability to work at the Children's Centre by the Director. This assessment will be made in relation to the skills and contributions being offered and after verification of the person's good character.

Volunteers will be required to attend an interview, complete induction training and sign both an agreement and confidential declaration form before they commence volunteer work.

Volunteers offering to assist in programs where students are involved will be asked to provide:

- Details of qualifications, experience and other information relevant to the program.
- The names of two referees, who may be called upon to verify information provided and attest to the character of the volunteer.

The Director's decision is final in determining who is eligible to work as a volunteer at the Children's Centre. Any applicant not accepted for volunteer work will be advised in writing.

Sequence of Steps for Volunteers

1. Make informal contact with the Children's Centre to ascertain Children's Centre needs re volunteers.
 2. Apply to the Children's Centre providing background information, referee details and signed confidential declaration.
 3. Attend an interview.
 4. Attend induction training.
- Sign agreement form.

- If working directly with children the Director will apply for a Criminal History Screening check

A Volunteer Can Expect

- a staff member to be allocated to supervise them in each area of their work
- accurate records to be kept of their training and work details
- to be provided with full induction training that will include:
 - Mandatory reporting
 - Occupational Health Safety & Welfare procedures
 - Duty of Care responsibilities to students
 - Confidentiality requirements
 - Training specific to the area of volunteer work
- volunteers will be matched with work that is suitable to their skills, interests, time commitments and health status
- to be consulted on matters that directly affect their work
- a supervisor to be available to discuss their concerns as they arise
- supervising teachers to meet their duty of care to students by not leaving a volunteer to work unsupervised with students
- reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses in relation to their work when the reimbursement is approved prior to expenditure

What we expect from Volunteers

A volunteer will support the objectives, policies and guidelines of the Ardtornish Children's Centre, and positively represent the interests of the children's centre and the families.

The volunteer's most important responsibility relates to his/her duty of care to children. Students are a vulnerable group generally, due to their age and lack of experience. Their vulnerability increases if they are very young, if they have an intellectual or physical disability, if they are newly arrived in Australia with English as a second language or if they experience emotional/physical neglect.

For volunteers, respecting the rights of children means they must not:

- work unsupervised with students
- be involved in toileting students or assisting with change-rooms/sickrooms
- have unsupervised contact with students during break times
- encourage affection from or dependency in students eg by giving presents
- have intentional physical contact with students (the supervising teacher will provide comfort/first aid to a distressed student)
- display harassing, bullying or intimidating behaviours towards students.

Volunteers must:

- refer all student concerns or behaviour issues to the supervising teacher
- refer all requests to access Children's Centre files to their supervisor
- sign the time book for volunteers on arrival and departure
- wear the provided name badge at all times
- notify the Children's Centre as early as possible if they are unable to fulfil their volunteer commitment.

Revision description	Next review
New Policy	February 2015

Dress Code

Volunteers are expected to dress in neat and tidy attire at all times including: clean, neat and tidy clothing; attention to hair, hands and nails, toe covered shoes for safety, the wearing of an apron and gloves, and the tying back of long hair when preparing food.

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 Director'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 Children's Centre.

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VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

As a volunteer at Ardtornish Children's Centre I agree to:

1. Work as a volunteer in the area/s of
2. Discuss any concerns in relation to Children's Centre matters with the appropriate staff member or the Director.
3. Keep all Children's Centre related matters confidential and under no circumstances approach parents or community members in relation to issues arising at the Children's Centre. I understand this is the responsibility of the Director.
4. Abide by the terms and conditions detailed in the volunteer policy including undergoing a Criminal History Screening Check if necessary.

As a volunteer

5. I have participated in an induction program and I understand my responsibilities regarding mandatory reporting, occupational health safety & welfare procedures, duty of care to students and confidentiality. I have also received training specific to my area of volunteer work.
6. I understand that if I breach any of the above agreements my services as a volunteer may be terminated.

Volunteer

**Director of Education and Care
(or Delegate)**

Signed

Signed

Name

Name

Date

Title

Date