

# *VOLUNTEER POLICY*

***WHOLE SCHOOL***



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## 1 POLICY

Toowoomba Christian College welcomes those wishing to volunteer their services and encourages parents of currently enrolled students to offer their time and expertise to assist the educational experience of our students.

The school will try to accommodate the wishes of volunteer parents, however each class is the responsibility of its teacher, therefore the appointment of volunteers will always be subject to among other things:

- a. the needs of individual classes and its teacher/s,
- b. the skills and expertise offered by the volunteer,
- c. suitable volunteer service times,
- d. the ability to accommodate the volunteer,
- e. the suitability of the volunteer under the Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act to interact with College students.

Volunteer service is an unpaid service offered to the College by suitable applicants to assist in day to day activities and in special events such as Athletic Carnivals.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all volunteers serving the College.

## 3 DEFINITIONS AND PRINCIPLES

Volunteers are those approved parents, caregivers and others usually from within the College community, who contribute their unpaid time, energy and expertise for the improvement of the College and its students, on tasks either planned or unplanned, long term or short term, in classrooms or out, requiring skilled contributions or otherwise.

Volunteers can be categorized as either:

- a. **Direct Contact Volunteers**  
Volunteers who are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and who would potentially have “unsupervised” contact with students during the normal course of providing the voluntary service. e.g. in-class instructional help, reading programs, exercise programs, sporting programs, classroom administrative work etc.
- b. **Indirect Contact Volunteers**  
Volunteers who are involved in providing support and services to the College community whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students. Generally such volunteers would not have responsibility for supervising students and would not have “unsupervised” contact with students during the normal course of providing the voluntary service. e.g. drama and musical productions, social activities, grounds work etc.

## 4 PRINCIPLES

Toowoomba Christian College recognises and values the contribution made by volunteers to the College.

Whilst the contribution of volunteers is recognised and valued, the College needs to provide a level of direction and support for volunteers, which ensures their contribution aligns with the College’s mission statement, practices, as well as meeting the requirements of all relevant legislation, particularly legislation which pertains to matters of health and safety and child protection.

Recognition should be given to volunteers for the contributions they make to the College e.g., private and public verbal and written thanks and appreciation, special group morning teas, flowers, chocolates etc.  
Volunteers have a right to work in a safe and secure workplace environment at the College.



Volunteers should be provided with appropriate support and/or instruction to help them carry out their tasks at the College. They should not be asked to carry out tasks which they feel uncomfortable or not competent to do.

Volunteering is not an automatic right. The College may decline an offer of volunteering. The College may terminate a volunteer arrangement at its discretion.

## 5 GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers may be sought formally through College newsletters, written invitations, formal nominations and personal approaches, as well as informally through conversation and opportunity.

Volunteers are required to carry out tasks in a manner consistent with the College's expectations, including the maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential working environment.

Injuries sustained by volunteers whilst volunteering must be reported to the school's First Aid Officer. The College will provide first aid as required. The College holds insurance policies, which cover volunteers in respect of liability claims from third parties, loss and injury and for personal accidents. Volunteers must be willing to have photos of their injuries taken and stored by the school.

Volunteers must sign in each day as they arrive on site, so that they can be accounted for during any emergency procedure.

All volunteers must comply with the College's Code of Conduct for Volunteers (included in Appendix 1- Volunteer Agreement).

Complaints by or about volunteers will be addressed via the school's normal practices.

All non-parent volunteers must undergo employment screening under the Commission and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2005 and hold a current Positive Notice Blue Card for volunteers.

A photocopy of each such Blue Card should be filed in the Volunteers Register.

Volunteers are expected to follow the principles of safety, respect, support, ethical communication, and ethical conduct.

### 5.1 Volunteers must:

- Work as directed and give appropriate feedback to the supervising leader.
- Behave honestly and with integrity.
- Support the Christian ethos of the school.
- Support the discipline policy of the school.
- Not bring the school's reputation into disrepute.
- Act with care and diligence.
- Behave and dress appropriately.
- Follow the instructions of the class/supervising teacher or other supervising college employee.
- Follow all safety procedures.
- Follow all emergency procedures.
- Work only according to their level of competency.



## 5.2 Volunteers must treat students and staff with respect thus they are to:

- maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality
- treat everyone with courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility
- assist in the creation of an environment free of fear and harassment
- report any concerns first to their supervisor

## 5.3 Appropriate Communication

Volunteers should use appropriate communication skills when engaging with students, thus they are to:

- acknowledge the needs and concerns of the individual
- practice effective listening (for example ask open questions, be alert to non-verbal communication, stay calm and relaxed)
- be aware of the young person's physical space
- be aware of their own body language
- be judicious in making physical contact with young people and at all times seek the young person's permission to do so
- stay calm and relaxed
- be clear and consistent
- use non-discriminatory respectful and non-judgmental language
- seek advice whenever appropriate
- follow all instructions from the staff and School administration
- are not to engage directly with media representatives and refer all enquiries to School Administration
- Refer to staff by their title e.g. Mr Brown

## 5.4 Termination

A volunteer will be terminated on the spot if they:

- smoke or use tobacco products while volunteering
- use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol at any time while volunteering
- use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs at any time while volunteering
- condone the use of or provide any of the above substances to any students, employees or other volunteers and utilise their position as a volunteer to take advantage of any young person.

A volunteer may be terminated if they are in breach of the Code of Conduct. The Principal may refer breaches to the appropriate authorities if necessary.

## 6 DIRECT CONTACT VOLUNTEERS

The following apply to Direct Contact Volunteers:

### 6.1 Teachers do not have to accept everyone who offers help.

When can a teacher say "No" to an offer of volunteering? Examples are:

- a. The services offered by the volunteer are not needed by the teacher
- b. When there is reason to believe that the class teacher cannot adequately supervise, instruct or otherwise utilise the volunteer's skills
- c. Where conflict may occur between volunteers.
- d. If the teacher has reason to suspect that the potential volunteer cannot comply with all of the requirements of this policy
- e. If the volunteer has demonstrated during prior voluntary service that s/he does not comply with the requirements of this policy



## 6.2 Duty of Care

The duty of care remains with the class teacher. The volunteer's duty of care is only by delegation. Volunteers must know what the teacher's expectations are and what are the "dos" and "don'ts" of the relevant operation.

## 6.3 Brief and De-Brief

Teachers must provide careful briefings and de-briefings to volunteers.

Ensure volunteers know what to do in an emergency. Brainstorm the likely and possible risks which might rise.

The following framework should be used to brief and de-brief volunteers.

Details
What to do
What not to do
Responsible to
Emergency Procedures

## 6.4 Supervision

Teachers need to appropriately monitor the work of volunteers.

Teachers need to check periodically on what is happening in the work of the volunteer and be ready to intervene immediately to forestall possible dangers and risk of injury. e.g. If a teacher has four volunteers available to supervise sub-groups on an excursion, then have four sub-groups. The teacher should not assign him/herself to another sub-group, but instead have a roving commission around all four of the sub-groups. The duty of care remains with the teacher.

## 6.5 Who is in charge

If a child's parent is present as a volunteer, the teacher, as the professional, is in charge, not the parent. As long as the teacher's instructions are reasonable and are not potentially dangerous, the parent cannot legally override the teacher's instructions about conduct or procedure.

## 6.6 Agreement

All direct Contact Volunteers must agree to and sign the Volunteer Agreement - Appendix 1.

A copy of this signed agreement should be filed in the Volunteers Register.

## 6.7 Information Leaflet

All direct Contact Volunteers must receive a copy of the information leaflet. Become A Volunteer At Toowoomba Christian College - Appendix 2. They must agree to abide by the directions in this information leaflet.

## 6.8 Application Process

All direct contact volunteers must complete, sign and return APPENDIX 3 – Volunteer Application Form in the first instance.

## 6.9 Register

Details of all direct contact volunteers should be recorded in the Register of Volunteers– APPENDIX 4.



## 7 INDIRECT CONTACT VOLUNTEERS GUIDELINES:

Indirect volunteers are usually associated with activities based in the Library, at drama and musical productions, assisting ground or maintenance staff or other administrative activities.

In all cases volunteers must abide by the Code of Conduct for Volunteers and supervising staff must follow the general principles and procedures applicable to teachers which are applied to Direct Contact Volunteers. In those cases the following actions need to occur:

- a. The volunteer must complete and return Appendix 3 – Volunteer Application Form.
- b. An assessment should be made of the information submitted in Appendix 3, in conjunction with the proposed tasks/jobs, which the volunteer would like to undertake.
- c. If any disabilities or other special needs (e.g. Pre-existing medical factors/conditions) are disclosed by the volunteer in APPENDIX 3, then a Work Capability Report must be completed and signed by a registered medical practitioner (Appendix 5).
- d. The information submitted in Appendix 5 should then be considered in conjunction with a risk assessment of the proposed tasks/jobs, which the volunteer would undertake.
- e. If the volunteer is approved, then appropriate training in the proposed tasks must be provided and proper records maintained.

ALL non-parent volunteers are required to hold a valid Blue Card, before commencing volunteer work.
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Where an applicant's application is approved, they must provide their Blue Card to the Business Manager's Personal Assistant for updating the College's Blue Card Register.

Where they do not hold a valid blue card, the Volunteer Form required to be completed is available from the CYPCG website, and they cannot commence their volunteer work until the new card is in their hands. There is currently no cost for Volunteer Blue Cards.

## 8 PROCESS FOR BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer at Toowoomba Christian College needs to complete a Volunteer Application form.

Copies are available at Reception or can be downloaded from our website.

Before beginning as a volunteer, the Volunteer Agreement including the Code of Conduct must be accepted and signed.

The College reserves the right to decline an application or to terminate a Volunteers service at its discretion.

## 9 TRAINING

The school will provide adequate training for the work undertaken by a volunteer. The school may require volunteers to acknowledge their training by signing their training package.



## **10 ROLES IN AN EMERGENCY**

If the evacuation alarm sounds (fire siren ringing a long “whoop whoop whoop”) all volunteers are to report to the Assembly Area, where your names will be checked against the Visitors Register.

## **11 CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY FOR VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are in a privileged position to observe the behaviour and academic progress of other parents’ children and the operations of the school.

Volunteers need to observe confidentiality. Volunteers are not to discuss personal issues about students or staff. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher.

Comments regarding children’s behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the College. If other parents ask volunteers for their observation of their children, volunteers are to direct them to the children’s teacher.

Volunteers who are concerned about issues in the school should raise the matter with their Supervisor.