

# Volunteers Policy

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## PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Tarneit P-9 College will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

## DEFINITIONS

**Child-related work:** work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional contact with children that is incidental to the work.

**Closely related family member:** parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

**Volunteer worker:** A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

**School work:** School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a school council
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.



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## POLICY

At Tarneit P-9 College we encourage parents to actively support student learning by becoming involved in a range of school and classroom activities and greatly appreciate the parents and community members who assist and support our programs.

Programs and activities may include:

- listening to students read.
- supporting class activities such as cooking, arts and crafts etc.
- attending excursions and camps.
- providing administrative support, such as laminating teaching aids and covering library books.
- supporting fundraising activities.
- participating in school activities such as World Reading Day, open mornings and school assemblies.
- joining the Parents' Association and School Council.

## Parent Helpers and Volunteer Workers

When parents assist with school programs they are classed as volunteers working at the school.

Any person whose duties usually involve or are likely to involve work in a school (paid or unpaid) is considered to be engaged in 'child-related work' and must be compliant with the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act). [www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol\\_act/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/vic/consol_act/).

A duty of care applies while students are under the care of the school. This duty applies equally to school-based activities and out of school activities. The same duty of care applies to employees and volunteers who assist at the school.

Volunteer workers are expected to assist the programs within the following guidelines:

- treat all students in a positive, impartial and fair manner.
- work under the direction of the teacher who is responsible for the class or group of children.
- refer any behaviour management issues to the classroom teacher, as he/she will then determine what course of action is to be followed in line with the Tarneit P-9 College's Code of Conduct.



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- operate within professional standards and confidentiality. Parent helpers are in a position of trust and should not discuss with other parents, adults or children any personal information about students, staff or other parent helpers learnt whilst involved in school programs.
- obtain a Working with Children check for volunteers, as they are considered to be engaged in 'child-related work' and must be compliant with the Working with Children Act 2005.
- be willing to assist all children or group of children within the classroom. This could mean that you may not always work with your child.

## Volunteers Code of Conduct

At Tarneit P-9 College we have high expectations of our Community. We expect all Volunteers will:

- promote a positive attitude towards learning.
- encourage their child to demonstrate positive behaviours and appropriate conflict resolution strategies – e.g. informing the teacher if there is a problem.
- support College decisions regarding behaviour management.
- ensure all interactions are respectful and appropriate language is used at all times within the College grounds.
- Contact the school if they have a question or are unsure of something.

## Tarneit P-9 College Procedures

- Volunteers need to provide the school with a Working with Children's Check. A register of parent helpers with a copy of their WWCC will be kept at the office. A receipt of application is acceptable until the official check is delivered.
- Volunteers sign in and sign out of the College via the visitors' book, located at the office.
- Volunteers will be given a Tarneit P-9 College lanyard to wear, indicating to staff and students that they are allowed to be in the school.

## Guidelines for Parent Helpers and Volunteers

**We value Learning.**

**We are Responsible.**

**We are an Inclusive community.**

**We take Pride in ourselves, each other and our College**

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The following guidelines are provided to support parent helpers and volunteers.

Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Use encouraging/positive words.</li> <li>○ Adopt a pleasant tone of voice.</li> <li>○ Use warm, open body language. For example, maintain eye contact.</li> </ul>
Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Set a good example. For example, look at and listen to the teacher when he/she speaks.</li> <li>○ Give students opportunities for decision making by offering limited and appropriate choices. For example, "Which book would you like to read?"</li> </ul>
Physical Contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Accept child-initiated contact where appropriate. For example, a child who high-fives you every time they see you.</li> <li>○ Redirect child-initiated contact where that contact is inappropriate. For example, a student who wants to cling on to your leg as you walk around the classroom.</li> <li>○ Reinforce <b>Hugs are for Home</b>.</li> <li>○ Discuss any concerns about appropriate contact with the class teacher.</li> </ul>
Dress Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Wear appropriate clothing for anticipated role and activities. When in doubt about a situation ask, the class teacher, Professional Team Leaders or Assistant Principal.</li> </ul>

## Compensation

### *Personal Injury*

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education and Training's Workers Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

### *Property Damage*

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.



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## ***Public Liability Insurance***

The Department of Education and Training's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:

- a claim for bodily injury to a third party
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

## **RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES**

Related local policies, including Statement of Values, Visitors Policy, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety/Child Safe Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct.

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on 22 May 2019 and is scheduled for review in May 2022.