



Catholic Education
Diocese of Rockhampton

Induction of Volunteers

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Scope: These guidelines apply to all in Catholic Kindergartens, Schools and Colleges conducted by Catholic Education, Diocese of Rockhampton (referred to as CEDR in the document).

Rationale

Catholic Education - Diocese of Rockhampton (CEDR) is committed to providing a safe working and learning environment for all employees, visitors, contractors and students. A 'volunteer' is a person who provides a service or works under the supervision of staff but who does not receive remuneration.

CEDR acknowledges that volunteers play a vital component in the social, environmental and cultural well-being which is an integral role in the school community. CEDR wishes to thank all volunteers for their individual efforts.

Volunteers at kindergartens, schools and colleges (schools/services) fall into three categories:

- **Working with students in the school environment (including school camps)**
- **Tuckshop volunteers**
- **Volunteers for a working bee**

A specific Workplace Health and Safety Induction and Student Protection has been created for each category of volunteer. The volunteer is to sign the Training Record Form (Appendix I) as evidence of the induction and this record is to be kept at the school/service.

Student Protection is everyone's business

As adults we all have a responsibility to care for children and young people and to protect them from all forms of harm as well as to positively promote their welfare.

CEDR seeks to continue its adherence to legislative requirements and duty of care to students by a commitment to the implementation of student protection strategies and procedures.

The volunteer's role in the school

Our aim is to give students the sense of being safe and valued as people so that they are secure and ready to learn at their best level. As a volunteer you play a significant role in the work of the school, form part of the school community and assist in providing the optimal learning environment for the students.

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This document outlines your responsibilities as a volunteer in the vital area of student protection and it is important that you read this document, in conjunction with the *Volunteers' Code of Conduct* (Appendix 2) so you understand your responsibilities in the protection of our students.

What is child abuse?

The term 'abuse' has been replaced in recent state legislation with the term "harm". Child '**abuse**' is any act, or failure to act, that leads to the '**harm**' of a child or young person. It can be better understood by thinking that 'abuse' is the action and 'harm' is the consequence.

The legal definition of 'harm'

Harm is defined legally in the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act and Regulations 2017*, and the *Child Protection Act 1999* as:

'Harm caused to the student under 18 years is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused.'

Within a school/service there are four circumstances where harm can be caused to a student. They are:

1. **Harm to a student by a staff member or volunteer of the school**
2. **Harm to a student by someone outside the school**
3. **Harm by other students**
4. **Student self-harm**

What are reasonable grounds to suspect harm to a student?

Reasonable grounds to suspect that harm to a student may have occurred is when:

- a student speaks about being harmed or being in danger of being harmed
- someone else (perhaps a relative, friend, acquaintance or sibling of the student) informs you that they suspect a student has been harmed
- a student tells you that they know a child who has been harmed (often the student is referring to him/herself)
- you observe a particular student's behaviour, physical appearance or social relationships that raises concerns of possible harm to the student
- you see the harm happening

What is a disclosure of harm?

Sometimes a student may approach you and tell you about their experience of being harmed. This is described as a disclosure. Disclosures of harm may sound like:

- "I think I saw..."
- "Somebody told me that..."
- "Just think you should know...."

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- "I'm not sure what I want you to do, but...."

If a student speaks to you about a concern, you need to be prepared so that you can be supportive of the student and clear about your own responsibility at the same time.

If a student tells you about being harmed or being at risk of harm

DO:

- Let them tell their experience first in their own words and in their own time
- Listen attentively to their story
- React calmly to the information the student provides though it might be upsetting
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing to tell e.g. "I am pleased you have told me these things"
- Don't question the validity of what they are telling you
- Reassure the child that it is not his/her fault that whatever the concern is has occurred
- At this stage you may ask for clarification ONLY if it is necessary. If you have the essence of the story, you probably have enough information to report your concerns
- Be thoughtful and careful of the student's feelings at this time. They may be distressed or ashamed, so they will need care and reassurance
- Be aware of privacy issues for the student
- Treat this information confidentially and discuss it only with the right person out of the hearing of other students
- Be honest with the student about your responsibility for taking action
- Act immediately to report the concerns to the Principal or a Student Protection Contact (SPC) (See below for more about this)

DO NOT:

- Panic
- React emotionally or accuse the alleged perpetrator
- Ask leading questions e.g. Was it your father who did this to you?
- Make promises that you cannot keep - particularly about not telling others (e.g. relevant adults such as the principal etc) about the information
- Leave the student alone immediately after a disclosure as they will be feeling very vulnerable at this time
- Discuss the situation with parents, caregivers or others (other than those designated e.g. Principal, Student Protection Contact (SPC)).

Your reporting responsibilities

In any instance where you either become aware, or reasonably suspect harm to a student has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring, you must report this as soon as possible to the Principal, Student Protection Contact (SPC) or the staff member in charge of the activity. Please check with your school principal about whom you are to report to if you have concerns about a student.

Maintaining confidentiality is vital for the protection of all involved.

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What happens next?

Once you have reported the alleged harm of a student, the Principal or SPC will do whatever is necessary to make sure the student is safe. Catholic Education has student protection reporting processes and all staff have received training in student protection. You can rest assured that your report will be taken seriously, dealt with immediately and reported to the appropriate State authorities where necessary.

Below are some scenarios for your consideration.

Scenario 1

You work as a volunteer in the tuckshop. You notice a Year 2 girl has a large bruise on her face and she tells you that she had been hit by her mother. You know her mother well. What do you do?

Scenario 2

You are a volunteer who assists with helping students to read. Another volunteer is working nearby with a student. You observe that the volunteer appears angry, is raising her voice at the student, poking the student on the shoulder. You have worked with this volunteer all year and usually have morning tea with her. What do you do?

Scenario 3

You are a volunteer and assist with the school Year 8 netball team. You notice that a female student in the team has cuts on her arms and on her legs. You enquire about the cuts and she tells you she did it to herself because she felt unhappy. What do you do?

Scenario 4

You are a volunteer parent assisting school staff take the Year 6 class on an excursion. On the bus one of the Year 6 girls tells you that one of the boys has been acting in a sexually inappropriate manner at the back of the bus. What do you do?

Scenario 5 – Kindergarten/ Service

You are volunteering at the centre and you notice a child has a number of bruises on their legs and is demonstrating aggressive behaviours towards other children including inappropriate language. What do you do?

Answers: In each of the above situations you should be reporting these incidents to the Principal or another delegated person e.g. SPC. You do not have to be sure that a student has been harmed.

Conclusion

If you have been involved in a student protection matter in your role as a school volunteer, be aware of your own reactions and seek support if required. Your Principal can assist you with this issue.

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Finally, please indicate on the school/service's 'Volunteer Register' that you have read and understood the *Induction of Volunteers Guideline*. If you would like to discuss your responsibilities further, please contact the Principal or a member of the school's leadership team.

Catholic Education thanks you for your support of our schools and our students.

Working with students in the school environment

The following information is provided to outline the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and Student Protection requirements for the school.

1. Signing in

Volunteers and Visitors to the school should:

- Report to administration building/office
- Sign in using Who's on Location. Be provided with a 'visitor' ID badge (to be worn at all times)
- Report to the area of prearranged volunteer work.
- Upon completion of the volunteer task Sign-out and return pass when leaving.

2. Fire

- The fire alarm can be raised by **pressing alarm button in administration office.**
- The fire alarm is a **continuous siren.**
- The assembly points are located **beside the church.**

In the event of the alarm being raised you must go immediately to your designated assembly point to be included in the roll call.

3. Lockdown Procedures

CODE BLACK EMERGENCY – LOCK-DOWN PROCEDURE

- Staff to notify the office if there are any unauthorised persons or persons of concern on school grounds.
- Office staff to sound the alarm – **MUSIC** (duration 30 seconds - 1 minute)
- Classes to wait for **all clear** from the office either via the intercom or class phone.
- All staff and students are to take refuge in their work space / classroom.
- Year 5 and 6 ESAs check UPPER YEAR toilets, Prep & Year 1 ESAs to check EARLY YEARS' toilets and Library Coordinator to check BIG SHED toilets before taking refuge.

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- IF OUT of the CLASSROOM for a lesson, or during LUNCH BREAKS, take refuge in the closest lockable room.
- Teachers to ensure all windows and doors are locked.
- Students and teachers sit on the floor, below window level and away from all doors.
- Ensure minimal movement from within each space.
- Turn off lights and fans.
- Teachers to contact the office of any absentees from the class or emergencies.
- If a room is unlocked and unattended and can be used to enter another room via a connecting door, a staff member can lock the door if safe to do so.

NEXT REVIEW DATE : JANUARY 2026

4. First aid

If at any time you require first aid assistance, you should contact **administration**. The names of First Aiders are displayed at various points around the school.

5. Reporting Accidents

All accidents on the school site must be reported to **Leadership/Administration** before leaving the school site. The reported incident will be submitted in the RiskMan incident reporting system by school staff.

6. Areas of the school that volunteers can enter/use toilets

The volunteers can use the following toilets/amenities located **in the administration building**.

7. Blue Cards

Regulations about having a Blue Card apply. Please consult with the Principal for further information. If you have a current Blue Card - please supply your Blue Card details to the administration at the school.

8. Hazardous Substances/Chemicals

A MSDS and risk assessment of the hazardous substances are available at the school. You must be familiar with the content before you using the product. It is important when chemicals such as solvents, turps, paints, fuels, cleaning liquids etc, are to be used that appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves, appropriate masks and clothing are available and worn. This information is included on the Material Safety Data Sheet.

9. Technology

All volunteers who will be accessing technology in the school environment or on school activities must read a copy of the Information and Communication Technologies Policy and sign a ICT Policy and Staff Code of Practice Acknowledge Form.

10. Essential Behaviours for All Volunteers

1. Avoid any behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment, inappropriate or harmful.
2. Ensure that language or actions (including that utilising technology) cannot be interpreted as inappropriate or sexualising a relationship.
3. Never ridicule, demean or intimidate a student or threaten their sense of personal safety.
4. Ensure, where reasonably possible, that another person is present or close by when working with a student and avoid situations where students are or may feel isolated.
5. Avoid, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a student or students, particularly in sleeping, dressing or bathroom areas.
6. Take particular care to respect personal space and be mindful of physical contact with students.
7. Never supply or serve alcohol, any prohibited or controlled substances to a student.
8. Never smoke, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with students.
9. Never discipline students in any circumstances. The teachers will decide on the disciplinary measures that are required.
10. Seek advice when there is any sense the relationship is uncomfortable, dysfunctional or unproductive.
11. Ensure personal appearance and presentation is clean, tidy and appropriate for your role in the school environment / activity.
12. Report any perceived breaches of professional conduct to the Principal or appropriate staff member.

Working with students in the school environment (including school camps)

The following information is provided to outline the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and Student Protection requirements for the school.

1. Working with Students One on One

Ensure, wherever reasonably possible, that another adult is present or close by when talking in a one-to-one situation with a student. Avoid providing pastoral care or individual tuition in situations where students are or may feel isolated. All physical contact with students should be avoided.

2. Disciplining Students

Volunteers (including parents) are not to discipline students in any circumstances. The teachers will decide on the disciplinary measures that are required. Volunteers (including parents) are to report any behavioural concerns to the teachers. Please ensure you are seen to respect the teacher's decision on all discipline matters.

3. Access to Student Areas

Volunteers (including parents) should not be entering student areas (dorms, bathrooms etc.) unless it is an emergency or you are directed to do so by a staff member. If it is necessary that you enter student areas, announce clearly that you intend to enter. Volunteers (including parents) should not enter living areas of students of the opposite sex. Avoid, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a student or students in sleeping, dressing or bathroom areas. Respect personal space e.g. when supervising the sleeping quarters of students. Clarify with the teachers (including on school camp) which bathroom and toilet the adults will be using.

4. Medication

Do not supply medication to any student. There are strict procedures which must be followed for this to occur.



5. Reporting Accidents

All accidents on the camp must be reported immediately to the teacher in charge. The reported incident will be submitted in the RiskMan incident reporting system by school staff.

6. Alcohol / Smoking

School camps are alcohol free and smoke free zones (including for adults). If a parent observes a student with prohibited substances they should inform the teacher in charge immediately.

7. Essential Behaviours for All Volunteers

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2. Ensure that language or actions (including that utilising technology) cannot be interpreted as inappropriate or sexualising a relationship.
3. Never ridicule, demean or intimidate a student or threaten their sense of personal safety.
4. Ensure, where reasonably possible, that another person is present or close by when working with a student and avoid situations where students are or may feel isolated.
5. Avoid, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a student or students, particularly in sleeping, dressing or bathroom areas.
6. Take particular care to respect personal space and be mindful of physical contact with students.
7. Never supply or serve alcohol, any prohibited or controlled substances to a student.
8. Never smoke, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with students.
9. Never discipline students in any circumstances. The teachers will decide on the disciplinary measures that are required.
10. Seek advice when there is any sense the relationship is uncomfortable, dysfunctional or unproductive.
11. Ensure personal appearance and presentation is clean, tidy and appropriate for your role in the school environment / activity.
12. Report any perceived breaches of professional conduct to the Principal or appropriate staff member.

Working in the Tuckshop

The following information is provided to outline the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and Student Protection requirements for the school.

1. Signing in

Volunteers and Visitors to the school should:

- Report to administration building/office
- Sign in using Who's on Location. Be provided with a 'visitor' ID badge (to be worn at all times)
- Report to the area of prearranged volunteer work.
- Upon completion of the volunteer task Sign-out and return pass when leaving.

2. Fire

- The fire alarm can be raised by **pressing alarm button in administration office.**
- The fire alarm is a **continuous siren.**
- The assembly points are located **beside the church.**

In the event of the alarm being raised you must go immediately to your designated assembly point to be included in the roll call.

3. Lockdown Procedures

CODE BLACK EMERGENCY – LOCK-DOWN PROCEDURE

- Staff to notify the office if there are any unauthorised persons or persons of concern on school grounds.
- Office staff to sound the alarm – **MUSIC**
(duration 30 seconds - 1 minute)
- Classes to wait for **all clear** from the office either via the intercom or class phone.
- All staff and students are to take refuge in their work space / classroom.
- Year 5 and 6 ESAs check UPPER YEAR toilets, Prep & Year 1 ESAs to check EARLY YEARS' toilets and Library Coordinator to check BIG SHED toilets before taking refuge.

- IF OUT of the CLASSROOM for a lesson, or during LUNCH BREAKS, take refuge in the closest lockable room.
- Teachers to ensure all windows and doors are locked.
- Students and teachers sit on the floor, below window level and away from all doors.
- Ensure minimal movement from within each space.
- Turn off lights and fans.
- Teachers to contact the office of any absentees from the class or emergencies.
- If a room is unlocked and unattended and can be used to enter another room via a connecting door, a staff member can lock the door if safe to do so.

NEXT REVIEW DATE : JANUARY 2026

4. First aid

If at any time you require first aid assistance, you should contact **administration**. The names of First Aiders are displayed at various points around the school.

5. Reporting Accidents

All accidents on the school site must be reported to **Leadership/Administration** before leaving the school site. The reported incident will be submitted in the RiskMan incident reporting system by school staff.

6. Areas of the school that volunteers can enter/use toilets

Adults must not use the same toilets as students. The volunteers can use the following toilets/amenities located **in the administration building**.

7. Blue Cards

Regulations about having a Blue Card apply. Please consult with the Principal for further information. If you have a current Blue Card - please supply your Blue Card details to the administration at the school.

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8. Hazardous Substances/Chemicals

A MSDS and risk assessment of the hazardous substances are available at the school. You must be familiar with the content before you using the product. It is important when chemicals such as solvents, turps, paints, fuels, cleaning liquids etc, are to be used that appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves, appropriate masks and clothing are available and worn. This information is included on the Material Safety Data Sheet.

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5. Avoid, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a student or students, particularly in sleeping, dressing or bathroom areas.
6. Take particular care to respect personal space and be mindful of physical contact with students.
7. Never supply or serve alcohol, any prohibited or controlled substances to a student.
8. Never smoke, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with students.
9. Never discipline students in any circumstances. The teachers will decide on the disciplinary measures that are required.
10. Seek advice when there is any sense the relationship is uncomfortable, dysfunctional or unproductive.
11. Ensure personal appearance and presentation is clean, tidy and appropriate for your role in the school environment / activity.
12. Report any perceived breaches of professional conduct to the Principal or appropriate staff member.

Volunteers at a Working Bee

The following information is provided to outline the Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) and Student Protection requirements for the school.

1. Signing in

Volunteers and Visitors to the school should:

- Report to administration building/office
- Sign in using Who's on Location. Be provided with a 'visitor' ID badge (to be worn at all times)
- Report to the area of prearranged volunteer work
- Upon completion of the volunteer task Sign-out and return pass when leaving.

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- The assembly points are located **beside the church.**

In the event of the alarm being raised you must go immediately to your designated assembly point to be included in the roll call.

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- Year 5 and 6 ESAs check UPPER YEAR toilets, Prep & Year 1 ESAs to check EARLY YEARS' toilets and Library Coordinator to check BIG SHED toilets before taking refuge.

Induction of Volunteers

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- Teachers to ensure all windows and doors are locked.
- Students and teachers sit on the floor, below window level and away from all doors.
- Ensure minimal movement from within each space.
- Turn off lights and fans.
- Teachers to contact the office of any absentees from the class or emergencies.
- If a room is unlocked and unattended and can be used to enter another room via a connecting door, a staff member can lock the door if safe to do so.

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4. First aid

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5. Reporting Accidents

All accidents on the school site must be reported to **Leadership/Administration** before leaving the school site. The reported incident will be submitted in the RiskMan incident reporting system by school staff.

6. Areas of the school that volunteers can enter/use toilets

Adults must not use the same toilets as students. The volunteers can use the following toilets/amenities located **in the administration building**.

7. Blue Cards

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8. Material Hazards

Before disturbing any existing structures i.e. walls in buildings you must ensure that you have ascertained if they contain any hazardous materials e.g. Asbestos. This must be checked prior to any work takes place. Seek advice about the asbestos register from the Principal. If you have any queries regarding such matters you must contact the Principal before any work takes place.

9. Hazardous Substances/Chemicals

A MSDS and risk assessment of the hazardous substances are available at the school. You must be familiar with the content before you using the product. It is important when chemicals such as solvents, turps, paints, fuels, cleaning liquids etc, are to be used that appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves, appropriate masks and clothing are available and worn. The information is included on the Material Safety Data Sheets.

10. Risk Assessment and Safe Working Procedures

Familiarise yourself with the school's safe working procedures for plant and equipment and activities such as using a ladder. Suitable access equipment must be provided by the school and must be used correctly. Follow manufacturer's guidelines and standard working procedures for all plant and equipment. Use the recommended personal protective equipment for all plant and equipment.

11. Construction Cards

A volunteer who undertakes high risk construction work activities would require a construction card.

12. Personal Protective Equipment

The school is not responsible to supply protective clothing. However, it is advisable for volunteer workers to wear suitable working attire including sun safe clothing. Should a volunteer worker use tools or equipment that needs safety equipment e.g. eye protection, ear muffs, helmets, safety harness then it is the responsibility of the school to supply this equipment and/or to ensure it is worn.

13. Safety Protocols Regarding Equipment and Manual Lifting

- Only complete tasks within your competency level
- Only use machinery supplies by the school (following instruction) or brought along personally. Do not use machinery supplied by another parent
- Only use tools and equipment for their designed purpose
- Follow manufacturer's guidelines for the use of all equipment
- Use the recommended Personal Protection Equipment for all machinery and equipment

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- Follow recommended manual handling procedures
- Wear appropriate footwear at all times
- Report accidents and injuries to the Principal

14. Essential Behaviours for All Volunteers

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8. Never smoke, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs while working with students.
9. Never discipline students in any circumstances. The teachers will decide on the disciplinary measures that are required.
10. Seek advice when there is any sense the relationship is uncomfortable, dysfunctional or unproductive.
11. Ensure personal appearance and presentation is clean, tidy and appropriate for your role in the school environment / activity.
12. Report any perceived breaches of professional conduct to the Principal or appropriate staff member.



APPENDIX 1

Training Record

Name of School/College: St Paul's Gracemere

School Staff Member Providing Information:

Organisation Service Provider Represents:

Volunteer Induction

I am aware of my WHS obligations, student protection reporting obligations and the expectations outlined in the *Essential Behaviours for All Volunteers* and the *Volunteer Code of Conduct*:

DATE	PARTICIPANT NAME	PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

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APPENDIX 2

Volunteers' Code of Conduct

Volunteers have a significant role in the work of the school. Volunteers have an integral part to play in providing a safe and enjoyable environment for young people.

Volunteers are expected to follow the principles of:

- Safety
- Respect
- Support
- Ethical Communication
- Ethical Conduct
- Keeping confidentiality

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Volunteers must think and act safety:

- Put safety first in all activities
- Follow the safety procedures, to the best of your ability, as outlined in the volunteer induction process
- If a direct threat is identified, assist in the evacuation of the area and/or situation as quickly as possible
- Work only according to your level of authority. Contact and report to a member of the school's leadership team or your supervisor when confronted with a situation which you are unable to contend with or is beyond your role and responsibility

Volunteers must treat student and staff with respect:

- Respect the rights of individuals and 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, harassment, racism and exploitation
- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of other although you may not always agree
- Take instruction from and not obstruct the responsible staff member in any way in regards to the execution of their duties
- Report any matter that would indicate harm or inappropriate behaviour to student to the Principal or Student Protection Contact (SPC)



Volunteers must be aware of communication skills when engaging with students:

- Acknowledge the needs and concerns of the individual
- Practice effective listening (e.g. 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 your own body language
- Refrain from any inappropriate or unwanted physical contact with young people
- Stay calm and relaxed
- Be clear and consistent
- Use non-discriminatory respectful and non-judgemental language
- Seek advice whenever appropriate and report problems
- As a volunteer, you must follow all instructions from the staff and school's leadership team

Volunteers must not:

- Smoke or use tobacco products while on duty (all Catholic schools and college are smoke-free)
- 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
- Verbally harass or abuse any person or use profanity while volunteering
- Utilise your position as a volunteer to take advantage of any young person

Any breaches of this *Code of Conduct* will be dealt with by the Principal in the first instance.