



## VOLUNTEER POLICY

### Statement of Context and Purpose

Volunteers are a valuable part of the Huntingtower community and volunteer work assists us to provide an extensive educational and cocurricular program. The nature of volunteer work at the School often involves work and interaction with children or young people. To this end, there are a range of obligations and responsibilities that must be embraced and championed by our volunteers.

The School appreciates the time commitment to help in our School community and as such needs to ensure that all volunteers and staff understand their responsibilities and obligations in becoming a Huntingtower volunteer. Should a volunteer have any questions please reach out to:

- The Human Resource Department
- The Principal or
- The supervising person who is overseeing the volunteering role

Huntingtower is committed to Child Safety and this Volunteer Policy provides a framework around supporting volunteer participation to ensure their safety and the safety of our students.

### Application

This policy applies to any individual who wishes to volunteer their time and skills in any area of the School and all staff of Huntingtower.

### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Huntingtower has a zero tolerance policy for child abuse and is committed to promoting child safety. The School 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, regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

The School promotes positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. Huntingtower is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive child safety and wellbeing culture designed to keep children safe.

It is important that all volunteers read and understand Huntingtower's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Codes of Conduct as it provides clear guidelines as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour towards children in our community.

### Purpose

Huntingtower recognises the value of volunteers in contributing to the School community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Volunteers may have a wide range of interests, skills and abilities that are able to complement our programs, thus giving a wider range of interactions and experiences to the students.

## Scope

### **Volunteers and Volunteer Activities**

A volunteer is an individual who works for the School without receiving any financial reward. Volunteers can be parents, guardians or carers of students at the School, School alumni or members of the broader School or local community. This may include, but is not limited to classroom support, administration support, fundraising and assisting with school events, camps or excursions.

#### ***It is our policy to:***

- Welcome the involvement of community members in providing assistance within the School
- Provide all volunteers with a safe working environment
- Publicise volunteer opportunities throughout the wider school community so as to provide all interested people with the opportunity to volunteer
- Ensure that the contribution of volunteers aligns with the School's mission and values
- Provide appropriate support and/or instruction to volunteers to help them carry out their tasks at the School
- Meet the requirements of all relevant legislation, particularly legislation that pertains to matters of workplace safety and child protection and
- Publicly recognise the contribution of volunteers within the School

## Duty of Care and Ongoing Supervision

The Principal and all staff have a duty of care to the students. This duty requires the Principal and all staff to take all reasonable steps to reduce risk, including the provision of suitable and safe premises and the provision of an adequate system of supervision. This duty is non-delegable, meaning it cannot be assigned to another person. All volunteers will be fully supervised by school staff at all times.

## Suitable Volunteers

At Huntingtower, we have strong child safety measures in place to ensure that all volunteers are suitable to work with children.

To ensure we are meeting our legal obligations under the Worker Screening Act 2020 and the Child Safe Standards, Huntingtower undertakes suitability checks which in most cases involves asking for evidence of a Working With Children Clearance (WWWC) and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity and work history involving children checks.

Every volunteer must follow the Schools Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, which outlines how we assess and verify their suitability based on their role and ensuring that all volunteers comply.

Huntingtower will provide appropriate induction training for all volunteers. This induction will include training on Huntingtower's child safety practices, reporting obligations and procedures, how to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people, how to respond to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm, how to support cultural safety and other various topics, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, International students, disabilities, diverse backgrounds, and other specific needs.

We require all volunteers to have a Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) unless they qualify for an exemption, such as registered teachers or police officers as required by the Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic).

## Responsibilities for all Volunteers

### **Volunteers are required to:**

- Complete the volunteer's register and induction training (annually) required by the School
- Be assigned a supervising teacher who will be available to discuss volunteer concerns as they arise
- Be committed to Huntingtower's Mission, Purpose and Values
- Provide and maintain a valid Working with Children Clearance (WWCC)
- Cooperate with the reasonable policies, procedures and instructions given by the School including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety and Parent Codes of Conduct
- Being aware of and complying with their legal obligations for the mandatory reporting of child abuse
- Being aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, being observant to and raising any concerns relating to child protection with one of the School's Child Protection Officers or a member of the School Executive Team
- Following any reasonable direction given by a management representative of the School in the interest of protecting the safety and wellbeing of its students
- Helping to implement the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Program in a manner commensurate with their role in the School
- Carry out tasks in a manner consistent with school expectations, including the maintenance of a professional, cooperative and confidential working environment
- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and ensure they don't adversely affect the health and safety of others
- Carry out tasks within the role assigned and not to perform duties they do not have the skills to undertake
- Refer all student concerns or behavioural issues to the Principal's Delegate
- Notify the School as early as possible if you are unable to fulfil your volunteer commitment and
- Report all workplace safety incidents or injuries to the School and comply with the Health and Safety policy and guidelines
- Complete sign in and sign out procedure each time they volunteer

### **Volunteers must not:**

- Work unsupervised with students
- Be involved in toileting students or assisting with change rooms/sickrooms, unless it's your own child/grandchild
- Encourage affection from or dependency in student (e.g., giving presents, having intimate physical contact or intimate personal contact through written or electronic means such as email, letters, telephone, text messages, social media sites or chatrooms) or
- Display bullying or intimidating behaviours towards students
- Use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs at any time

### **Cessation of Volunteers**

The volunteer program and services delivered are at the sole discretion of the School and at any time the School may cease volunteer engagement at any time without notice.

### **Record Keeping**

The School shall at minimum maintain the following records:

- The name, address and contact details of the volunteer
- A copy of the background information provided by the volunteer including details of reference checks
- A volunteer registration information form that acknowledges that they have read and understood all policies and codes required to be a volunteer
- A copy of the Volunteer's Working with Children Clearance
- A photo of the volunteer via photo identification e.g Drivers Licence
- The name of the volunteer's supervisor
- A copy of any complaints that have been raised against the volunteer and
- The work undertaken by the volunteer including details of any unscheduled activities and off-site excursions where practicable to do so

## **Volunteer Health and Safety**

Huntingtower Personal Accident Insurance Cover is in place for volunteers.

## **Staff Responsibility**

All staff are expected to:

- Follow these policy guidelines and ensure that any volunteer is fully supervised
- Not permit a volunteer to perform volunteer activities unless the volunteer has been approved in accordance with this Volunteer Policy
- Provide induction training to all volunteers where requested to do so and
- Immediately report any matters of concern relating to volunteers

## **Implementation**

This policy has been implemented through:

- Staff training
- Volunteer supervisors
- Being available publicly on the School's website
- Induction training and supervision
- Effective complaints handling procedures
- Effective incident notification procedures

## **Discipline for Breach of Policy**

Where a staff member breaches this policy Huntingtower may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

Where a volunteer breaches the Codes of Conduct or this policy, the school may ban the individual concerned from engaging in further volunteer activity on behalf of the School.

## **Related documents**

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Identifying, Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Privacy Policy

## **Communication**

This Policy is available to volunteers via the School's website. In addition, relevant aspects of this Policy will be raised and discussed at parent and staff meetings and in the School bulletin.

## **Evaluation**

The Principal is primarily responsible for monitoring Huntingtower's overall compliance with this Policy. This Policy will be reviewed as part of Huntingtower's review cycle (and otherwise as and when required).

## **Authorisation**

This Policy was authorised by the Principal October 2023

Reviewed October 2024

Date of next review October 2026