



# The Launceston Preparatory School

Truth and Happiness

## Volunteer Code of Conduct

### Rationale

The Launceston Preparatory School places great value on the role of volunteers for many reasons. Foremost amongst these is our philosophy which views education as a partnership between home and school. Therefore, to have parents/carers working in our school to assist children reinforces the interdependent role we share. It also sends a positive message to children that parents/carers and the school believe each other is important and that learning transcends any physical boundaries between home and school. We believe it is also an important way of encouraging parents and carers to feel comfortable about entering the school and contributing to their children's education.

There are many opportunities for parents, carers and others to assist in our school. They include:

- working with children on a one-to-one basis on literacy, numeracy and physical skills
- assisting small groups with art, craft, cooking etc.
- sharing areas of expertise with children
- assisting at sporting events and in team coaching roles
- via the *Parents of The LPS* group, helping to organise fundraising and other events
- attending school functions to develop a sense of school community.

This list is not exhaustive and the Principal welcome suggestions for other ways in which parents, carers and others might assist in a volunteer capacity.

Although volunteers are not employed by the school, there is a comprehensive code of behaviours which they are expected to follow in order to preserve the wellbeing of our students, the consistency of our expectations, and the reputation of our school.

### Conduct of Volunteers

Volunteers at The Launceston Preparatory School are expected to conduct themselves in both a professional and ethical manner which respects and promotes the collective interests of the school. They must ensure their personal appearance and presentation is clean, tidy and appropriate to their role within the school.

Volunteers must behave with honesty and with integrity. They must be aware of and respect the rights of others as well as respecting the differences in people, their ideas and opinions.

Volunteers, regardless of their direct or indirect contact with students, must be mindful of behaving in an appropriate manner at all times. Volunteers have a duty of care to be positive role models for students and maintain professional relationships with students at all times.

Obviously, volunteers may develop their own relationships with the children with whom they work and this adds a positive dimension to the program. However, if volunteers believe any issues raised with them by students require action, they should be referred immediately to either the child's class teacher or the Principal.

Students are expected to be polite and co-operative with volunteers, staff and other visitors to the school. Volunteers are encouraged to reinforce courteous relationships with students. However, behaviour management issues should be referred to the relevant teacher. Volunteers should not take it upon themselves to discipline students.

### ***Use of school resources***

Volunteers must ensure that all school resources are used in an appropriate manner and that proper regard is shown for school property and the property of others. All resources are available for volunteers to use appropriately in the course of their work. At no time shall resources be wasted or used exclusively for personal means.

For most tasks, staff will prepare the necessary materials and program and explain requirements to volunteers. Volunteers must ensure they do not breach copyright law or licensing arrangements when copying any property, such as software, library and reference materials.

Every volunteer will bring his/her own approach and personality to the task and we believe this enriches our school. However, volunteers are requested to adhere to the task at hand and not introduce their own initiatives to school activities without first checking with relevant staff or the Principal.

### ***Child Safety***

All students have a basic and expected right to a safe physical and emotional environment that is free from harm. "Harm" includes any significant detrimental effect on the student's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing by any cause, other than accidental harm not involving negligence or misconduct. Harm to a student includes minor harm that is cumulative in nature that would result in a detrimental effect of a significant nature to the student if allowed to continue.

Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:

- a) physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- b) sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- c) domestic or family violence; or
- d) bullying or harassment; or
- e) self-harm.

Volunteers must actively seek to prevent harm to students and to refer any concerns in this area to the Principal.

Volunteers must have a sound understanding of their legal requirements for Mandatory Reporting in relation to *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997*. <https://www.legislation.tas.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1997-028>

### **Discrimination**

The Launceston Preparatory School does not tolerate discrimination, bullying or any form of harassment from staff, students, volunteers or our wider school family. This includes non-verbal or emotional bullying, physical or verbal bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination or intimidation. Discrimination is essentially any practice which makes distinctions between individuals or groups so as to disadvantage some and advantage others.

Discrimination in relation to students can include any of the following:

- noting or observing a difference between students
- making a decision against a student
- exhibiting prejudice towards a student
- making biased judgments
- supporting activities that mark distinctions.

### **Sexual Misconduct**

Volunteers' interactions with all students and staff must be and be seen to be professional at all times. They must not provide or exchange personal information such as telephone numbers with any student. Sexual misconduct is a grave issue and may result in criminal charges.

Sexual misconduct includes, but is not necessarily restricted to:

- a) conduct towards a person that would constitute a criminal offence of a sexual nature; or
- b) conduct that is sexual harassment as specified in section 17(3) of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1998*; or
- c) any other sexual conduct directed towards or involving any student. Sexual conduct is any behaviour that might reasonably be interpreted as being designed or intended to arouse or gratify sexual desires.

The following behaviours also constitute either misconduct or sexual misconduct:

- a) unwarranted and inappropriate touching of students or staff
- b) suggestive remarks or actions of a sexual nature
- c) sexual exhibitionism
- d) obscene gestures, language, jokes containing sexual references or deliberately exposing students to the sexual behaviour of others in any form, other than in the case of prescribed curriculum material in which sexual themes are contextual
- e) inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- f) comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner
- g) personal correspondence (including electronic communication) with a student in respect of the adult's sexual feelings for a student
- h) deliberate exposure of students to sexual behaviour of others including display of pornographic material
- i) flirtatious behaviour directed at a student
- j) dating a student
- k) spending significant time alone with a student other than to perform one's professional duties, or without other reasonable explanation
- l) expressing romantic feelings towards a student in any way.

Sexual misconduct can also include 'grooming behaviour'. Grooming behaviour is a process whereby sexual offenders condition and build rapport with children or young persons in order to reduce their resistance to, and increase compliance with, sexual abuse.

The grooming process can include:

- a) misleading students by pretending that they are special; for example, by spending inappropriate time with students, inappropriately giving gifts, showing special favours or allowing students to overstep the accepted rules etc.
- b) breaking accepted standards of behaviour; for example, undressing in front of students, allowing students to sit on their lap, talking about sex, 'accidental' touching etc.

### ***Use of tobacco, alcohol, other drugs and medication***

The school *Drug Policy* is binding to all members of the school community and actively opposes the inappropriate use of legal drugs and the possession and use of prohibited substances.

The school is a smoke-free working environment to protect the health of everyone. This applies to all employees, school families and visitors to the school whether they are inside school buildings or outside in the playgrounds.

Consumption of alcohol, drugs or medications must not affect the work performance or working relationships of any employee or volunteer, their personal safety or that of others. It must not impact on conduct at any time. All volunteers are prohibited from drinking alcohol while they are responsible for the care of students.

### ***Use of Digital Devices***

Volunteers must use all electronic devices in a respectful manner suitable for educational purposes. They must not use school resources, including the internet or electronic mail for:

- a) accessing, storing, or transmitting works, images or other material that are illegal, sexually explicit, violent or that a reasonable person finds offensive
- b) gambling
- c) accessing chat lines not associated with work
- d) transmitting inappropriate jokes
- e) sending of frivolous programmes or mail
- f) excessive use of the Internet
- g) use of social media

### ***Use of social media***

Volunteers are responsible for the content they publish on any social media platform. They should recognise the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to their credibility and that of the School.

If the Principal becomes aware of images or text in social media that are inappropriate or could compromise the school or a staff member, they reserve the right to request it be removed from the social medium. Volunteers should refrain from engaging with social media while they are carrying out voluntary activities for the school.

### **Privacy**

Ensuring the privacy of our students, their families, our staff and volunteers is important. All volunteers are expected to take great care of documents which hold confidential, sensitive or private information.

### **Work Health and Safety**

Volunteers are expected to promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students, their families and other employees. All employees are responsible for being aware of, acting on and reporting Work, Health and Safety issues.

When supervising students, volunteers are required to take such steps as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect students or visitors from reasonably foreseeable injury. All volunteers are expected to exercise the degree of care that a normal person would take in the circumstances.

Volunteers must comply with all workplace health and safety instructions. They must be alert to actual or potential health or safety risks and hazards and should act within their delegation to remove or secure the risk or hazard, or alert the Principal/s.

### **Procedures**

Parents, guardians and carers are welcome to enter classrooms with their children at the start of the school day. If they wish to stay for a short time to chat with the teacher or engage in an activity with their child, no formal procedures need to be followed.

Parents, guardians and carers who wish to volunteer at the school must sign in at the school office on their arrival, receive and wear a "VISITOR" badge to wear while on site, then sign out at the school office on departure from the school premises.

Volunteers must also have completed the attached registration and submitted it to the Principal.

### ***Procedures for dealing with breaches of the Volunteer Code of Conduct***

Breaches of the *Volunteer Code of Conduct*, including apparent breaches and allegations, will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. These principles include the following:

#### Procedural Fairness

- a) procedures should be explicit and known to all;
- b) reports of alleged or apparent breaches of the code should be made as soon as practicable after the behaviour/incident occurs;
- c) the alleged or apparent breach should be clearly defined;
- d) the alleged or apparent breach should be dealt with as soon as possible.

#### Natural Justice

- a) the right to know the allegations;
- b) the right to respond; and
- c) the right for any inquiry to be free from bias.

Investigations into alleged or apparent breaches of the *Code of Conduct* will be dealt with as soon as possible by the Principal and/or members of the Board of Management. All aspects of the investigation will be documented.

An investigation may result in:

- a) providing the volunteer with a warning to increase awareness of his/her actions and how they may be perceived by others
- b) dismissal from work
- c) criminal charges

### **Working with Vulnerable People Registration**

Volunteers must maintain a current Working with Vulnerable People Registration. Working with Vulnerable People Registration (WWVP Registration) is a compulsory check for many people who work with children under the age of 18 years in Tasmania. It was established by the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* (the Act) and is administered by the Department of Justice.

The Act applies to anyone involved in child-related work in Tasmania. It does not matter whether the work is paid or unpaid, supervised or unsupervised.

The Act prescribes that anyone who is involved in a 'regulated activity' must hold a valid WWVP Registration. Regulated activity in a school setting involves any teaching, training, care and/or supervision.

The majority of people volunteering at The Launceston Preparatory School will require a WWVP registration. A register of volunteers and their WWVP registrations is maintained by the school.

Further information and online registration can be found at [http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working\\_with\\_children/application](http://www.justice.tas.gov.au/working_with_children/application).

### **Evaluation**

This procedure will be reviewed as part of the school's policy review cycle.

### **Related information**

[Parent Code of Conduct.pdf](#)



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## Volunteer Registration details

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact:  email: \_\_\_\_\_

phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Your relationship to the school: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency contact details: Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

School activity in which you volunteer: \_\_\_\_\_

Period of availability: \_\_\_\_\_

Working with vulnerable People Registration:

Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date: \_\_\_\_\_

(Please ensure you have listed The Launceston Preparatory School as an organisation for which you volunteer.)

- I have read and understood The Launceston Preparatory School *Volunteer Protocols*.
- I have read and understood The Launceston Preparatory School *Mandatory Reporting* policy.
- I undertake to maintain current WWVP registration and keep The Launceston Preparatory School updated with details.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_