

Volunteer Guidelines

tips for a positive volunteer experience



How to be a good volunteer

- **Be a good ambassador.** Help spread the word about all the good things that your school is doing. If you have any concerns about anything happening at the school, please speak to the principal.
- **Be courteous and respectful.** You make the school a happier place by doing so, and the appreciation you'll receive in return makes your volunteer time more fun too.
- **Set a good example.** By wearing appropriate clothes and using respectful language, you can help set a good example for students that school is an important place that deserves our respect.
- **Be punctual and reliable.** Volunteers are most helpful when they can be counted on. If you can't make it for a scheduled task, or will be late, please call the school office as far in advance as possible. Be fair and realistic with yourself about the times that you can volunteer and then stick with that schedule.
- **Keep confidential information confidential.** As a volunteer in a school, you may learn confidential information about students, their families, or staff members. It is critical that you keep that information confidential and not divulge it to family or friends. You are in a position of trust.

Learn the basics

Your job will be easier if you learn the following:

- How to find your way around the school, including the location of toilets, supply and workroom areas, staff areas, and entrances and exits.
- Where to sign in and out, and how to get a badge.
- How and where to use the school phone.
- How to operate any necessary equipment, like a photocopier, fax or computer.
- What to do in an emergency.
- Who to call if you can't make it in.
- Where to park.
- Your school's calendar and schedule.
- School behaviour management policies and procedures.

Guidelines for volunteers

Background checks

Sometimes volunteers are required to pass a police check before they are placed near students. Your school will provide a police vetting form for you to complete if this is necessary.

Sign-in

All volunteers should sign in at the start of a volunteer shift, and sign out at the end. This lets school staff know you are in the school and where they can find you if they need you. It is also required to keep track of your Give Me Five hours.

Badges

All volunteers should wear a volunteer's badge so staff and students will recognise you as a safe person in the school.

Healthy volunteers

Schools need to provide a healthy and safe environment for students, staff and visitors. Please don't come to school if you are ill. Remember to call the school if you won't be in. Some schools keep a 'substitute volunteers' list that they can use when a volunteer is unable to make it.

Behaviour Management

Familiarise yourself with the behaviour management policies and practices of the school. As a volunteer, you need to be aware of what behaviour is acceptable for students, and report unacceptable behaviour to a teacher. It is then up to the teacher to determine what should be done about the behaviour.

Emergencies

Make sure you obtain a copy of the emergency procedures and read them thoroughly. You should speak with a staff member about how you can help in the event of an emergency. Schools hold regular drill for various emergency procedures; find out your role during these drills and help out by sticking to the plan.

If you are volunteering away from the school, the supervising teacher will give you clear instructions about potential risks and what to do in case of an emergency in that situation. Ask for clarification if there is anything you are unsure of.

Hazards

If you see a potentially hazardous situation, you should take steps to avert any immediate danger to people, as long as it will not further endanger yourself or others. Report the matter immediately to a teacher.

Where a student is injured, a staff member must be contacted immediately. Another student may be sent to do this.

Evacuation

Each building will have an evacuation map posted. Please study it and become familiar with the required exits and evacuation routes. Success during emergencies relies on everyone following the same plan.

Harassment and discrimination

Harassment and discrimination of any type are not permitted in school. A copy of the policy and procedures on how to deal with harassment or discrimination is available from the school office. If you observe harassment or discrimination you should *always* report the incident to the principal.

Child abuse

Volunteers should report suspected incidents of child abuse to the principal. This can include physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect. The school will have a policy and procedures for child abuse reporting. Do not share the information with the student's family. Do not share the information with *anyone* else. The information *must* be kept confidential.

Keep safe

Keep yourself safe. Stay within reasonable proximity of the supervising teacher. Do not allow yourself to be in a position where allegations of inappropriate conduct could be made against you. If working with students, always work in a place where other people can see you, never allow yourself to be on your own with a student, and be very careful about any sort of physical contact with students.

In case of problems ...

If you have problems in your volunteer assignment, talk to your immediate supervisor. If you have problems with your supervisor, speak with the volunteer co-ordinator. Please let these people know about any difficulties you are having in your work so you can work together to find a solution. We want you to feel productive *and* happy.

Information resources

- If there is anything about school that you are unsure of, just ask a teacher or other staff member.
- For more information about your school's policies and procedures, please ask at the school office.
- For information about volunteering opportunities in your school, ask the Give Me Five Co-ordinator.
- For more information about the Give Me Five programme, visit www.givemefive.org.nz .
- For information and support for your parent group, visit www.nzpta.org.nz .
- For information about volunteering in New Zealand visit www.volunteeringnz.org.nz .

Thank you for making the ***Give Me Five*** promise.

Let's see h😊w far a little v😊unteering can g😊!