



## VOLUNTEERS POLICY

### Context

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding school for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. Edmund Rice Education Australia is committed to providing safe and supportive environments where all children and young people entrusted to our care are affirmed in their dignity and worth as a person. This policy should be read in the context of the College Child Protection and Safety Policy.

### Background

Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), as St Patrick's College's governing authority, sets the policy framework for all EREA schools. These policies have been contextualised for St Patrick's College's particular school environment so that our policies reflect the needs of our students.

### Rationale

St Patrick's College (**the College**) recognises that families are the primary educators of their children and that the College's role is to work with families to provide an authentic Catholic education for boys in line with the charism of Blessed Edmund Rice. Catholic education by nature is community based, bringing together a range of stakeholders to provide education for boys that seek to share and live out the word of God in all areas of life. As such the College recognises the integral role that volunteers within the College play and actively seeks to develop structures and procedures that encourage members of the College community (parents, Old Collegians, past parents, friends of the College and other community representatives) to become actively involved in the life of the College.

These involvements are underpinned by the acknowledgement that they are done in the best interest of the boys. The College also recognises that it has legal obligations to all volunteers and to all students who may have direct or indirect dealings with volunteers. The College is also committed to recognising and rewarding the work of volunteers and to developing a culture of volunteerism where all members of the community feel welcomed and supported in giving of their time and energy to improve the educational opportunities provided to boys at the College.

This policy **must** be read in conjunction with the EREA Child Safe Code of Conduct.

### Purpose

The College recognises the value that volunteers bring to its programs and services and seeks to provide a rewarding personal experience for all volunteers. The College appreciates that these services are provided for no financial reward and, in many cases, realise considerable cost and time savings for the College. The College acknowledges its legal obligation to volunteers to provide a safe and enjoyable work environment in line with all relevant legislation. The recognition of volunteers is central to the College's mission and strategic foundations:



## Policy

The College values and encourages the involvement of volunteers within all appropriate programs and activities.

## Guidelines

Volunteers will receive the same legal protection as paid workers in terms of Occupational Health Safety and Welfare and Equal Opportunity and therefore will be accorded the same rights and have the same expectations as paid employees under this legislation, except for the payment of wages. The College will ensure that their Public Liability insurance cover applies to the potential liability for the negligence of volunteers.

In implementing this policy the following should be noted:

1. Volunteer is defined as a person who undertakes activities without monetary reward and of their own free will. They undertake activities that are of benefit to the College and the local community. Volunteers undertake activities that complement but do not replace the services provided by paid staff and may be utilised to perform activities that extend and enhance services provided by the College.
2. Volunteers can expect clear delineation of their duties, responsibilities and working environment and will be provided with up-to-date Role Descriptions which clearly set out their duties, time commitment, responsibilities and reporting requirements.
3. Volunteers will be provided with induction and orientation which outline the College's operations, policies, and safety requirements.
4. In designated programs or where required by Government legislation, a volunteer must complete a satisfactory Working with Children Check prior to commencing their volunteer placement.
5. The College shall maintain the right to both refuse a volunteer placement or to end a placement if:
  - a. there is an actual or perceived risk to the student's or volunteer's health or welfare.
  - b. suitable volunteer duties are not available or are no longer available.
  - c. the volunteer does not comply with the College's policies and procedures.
6. Appropriate insurance cover is provided for volunteers who are identified as registered volunteers of the College whilst working in clearly defined activities which are approved and controlled by the College. A registry of all volunteers working on behalf of the College will be maintained by the Risk & Compliance Manager in liaison with relevant department representatives.
7. The College will actively seek to recognise and reward volunteers in non-financial ways which highlight the College's appreciation of the significant contribution volunteers make to enhancing the educational opportunities afforded to students. Such recognition may take the form of listing in College communications, hospitality, certificates of dedicated volunteer functions for example.
8. Rights of Volunteers:
  - a. To be treated respectfully and be valued as an important member of the College community.



- b. To receive on-going support and direction from a nominated supervisor.
- c. To work in a safe environment.
- d. To have complaints or grievances addressed by the College's Deputy Principal and/or Business Manager.
- e. To be able to decline or withdraw from work if it is not suitable, or is placing excessive demands on a volunteer.

#### 9. Responsibilities of Volunteers

- a. At all times when working as a volunteer on behalf of the College, volunteers should model behaviour consistent with the Catholic ethos of the College. Volunteers through their actions, words or conduct should not be seen to engage in behaviour that is contrary to the Catholic teachings of the College.
- b. To become familiar with, and work within the appropriate policies and procedures of the College.
- c. To become familiar with, and work within the EREA Code of Conduct and the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- d. Respect and maintain confidentiality of confidential information.
- e. Participate in relevant training and development.
- f. Perform responsibilities as defined in the volunteer's Role Description.
- g. Work within a team structure and accept any direction and supervision from appropriate paid staff.
- h. Inform a College staff member if they are unable to attend their volunteer role at any time.
- i. Work in a safe manner and not put others at risk.

#### 10. Volunteers Register

- a. All details of Volunteers of the college will be listed on the College Volunteer Register and checked annually.
- b. Only Volunteers listed on the College Volunteers Register may perform duties at the College.

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**Status of Policy:** Ratified by the College Advisory Board:  
Updated, August 2021, to meet Ministerial Order No. 870

**Review:** 2023