



# ALAWA PRIMARY SCHOOL

## POLICY

**TITLE OF POLICY:** Volunteers at Alawa Primary School

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** 19/01/2015

**REVIEW DATE:** November 2015

**TARGET AUDIENCE:** Volunteers

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### 1. POLICY

To provide a clear understanding to the school community, parents and staff, regarding volunteer involvement at the school. The involvement of parents & community members in our programs is very much valued and encouraged.

Volunteers bring a range of skills, interests and experiences that can enhance the learning opportunities and promote school values for students and the school community. The activity undertaken by volunteers is determined by the teacher/s in charge in conjunction with the Principal and will vary depending on the needs of the students and the specific program.

### 2. BUSINESS NEED

The school community & staff requested clarification on the boundaries and expectations for volunteer involvement at the school. This is also driven by the introduction of the Ochre card as a requirement for all adults working or volunteering in schools.

### 3. SCOPE

The policy covers all volunteers that are expressing an interest in participating in programs at the school.

### 4. DEFINITIONS

Key terms include:

**Teacher in Charge:** refers to the teacher who is responsible for the class at that particular time, thus having ultimate responsibility (duty of care) and therefore authority while the activity is in progress.

**Volunteer:** any adult visiting the school on behalf of a child enrolled in the school or an adult visiting the school from the wider community who has no family connection within the school.

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the Principal and teachers' responsibility to make the policy known to all parties concerned.

It is everyone's responsibility to demonstrate and model respectful language and behaviours in line with the core values of Alawa School:

- Respect
- Encouragement
- Pride
- Personal Best

It is the volunteer's responsibility to comply with the policy.

Staff, led by the leadership team, will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of compliance of the policy. Non-compliance will be reported to the Principal and dealt with at the Principal's discretion.

The policy will be reviewed by school staff and the Principal at the end of the 2015 school year.

The policy directs that volunteers will meet the following requirements in the learning environment:

- All volunteers are required to register their interest in volunteering through the front office and complete a volunteer information form and provide a copy of their Ochre Card [if they have one]. If no Ochre Card is held the involvement / visit to the learning spaces will be at the discretion of the Principal.
- The teachers will consider offers with an open mind. Any visits should be negotiated in advance wherever possible to avoid disappointment on a particular day.
- Ongoing volunteer involvement requires Principal / Assistant Principal approval.
- The teacher/specialist will outline for the volunteer the role they would like them to perform whilst at the school.
- The volunteer's role is to assist the students with the set activity showing leadership and guidance without performing the task for the students.
- The volunteers should prepare themselves by reading the activity or being briefed by the teacher / specialist ahead of time, then guiding their group through gathering the necessary equipment, setting up and following each step. They should also guide their group in cleaning up and putting equipment away. Volunteers should also follow safety guidelines at all times, and work collaboratively as a team.

- While volunteers are there to help, they should be 'hands-off'. In order for students to get the most out of their time at school they should be encouraged to explore, experiment, ask questions and solve problems. The students should be encouraged to view the learning spaces as their own space, where they can feel safe and comfortable and express themselves with artwork and projects.
- Volunteers are strongly encouraged to hold an Ochre Card in line with NT DECS guidelines and policy.
- Respectful language and behaviour must be used at all times, in line with the NT schools Code of Conduct.
- Appropriate clothing and footwear must be worn at all times, including covered shoes in both the kitchen and the garden and additionally a hat and a sleeved shirt in the garden.
- Volunteer discretion & confidentiality is compulsory. In no circumstances will volunteers discuss or share personal observations or concerns pertaining to individual children, the teacher or the program other than with the Principal who will then follow up if required or recommend a report be made by the volunteer as stated in the 'Safeguarding the Wellbeing of Children – Obligations for the Mandatory Reporting of Harm and Exploitation' policy.
- Volunteers are encouraged to share the successes in general terms regarding programs without mentioning names or referring to individuals.
- Volunteers must not take photos or video footage without permission from the school Principal. If permission is granted, photos/footage is restricted to the volunteer's own children.
- Behaviour management is the sole responsibility of the teacher. Volunteers are encouraged to report any concerns or behavior matters to the teacher in the learning space or the Principal.
- Volunteers must not physically move or interfere with any children at any stage unless there is a life threatening / extremely dangerous situation.
- If a volunteer is assisting in the lesson each child remains a member of that class and will be expected to continue to observe the teacher's expectations, advice and guidance. It is important for volunteers to recognize and accept that at times the group they are asked to work with may not have their own child as a member.
- Volunteers may be asked to leave at any time at the discretion of the teacher or the Principal / Assistant Principal if any of these expectations are not observed.

## **6. RELATED POLICY, LEGISLATION AND DOCUMENTS**

The policy links to the Code of Conduct for Schools Policy which clarifies the standards of behaviour expected from all individuals performing core functions on behalf of the school or visiting the school for a variety of purposes. This policy can be viewed at the following site:

<http://www.education.nt.gov.au/about-us/policies/documents/schools/school-management/code-of-conduct>

Further Departmental policies can be made available through the front office of the school.

7. **EVALUATION**

The policy will be reviewed by the Alawa School Council at the beginning of the 2016 school year.