



Swan Christian
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy

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Preamble From the CEO

Whatever you do, work at it with all you heart, as something done for the Lord and not for men
Colossians 3:23

SCEA will only succeed in achieving our objectives where we have the respect of our stakeholders (including our students, parents and colleagues) and the communities in which we operate. Our reputation is dependent on a culture where every one of us acts with the highest level of integrity and honesty and takes responsibility for their actions. Our Board is committed to ensuring our Association operates with the highest level of integrity and expects all employees to do likewise. The Board is also committed to providing a child-safe environment which safeguards all students and is committed to promoting practices which provide for the safety, well-being, and welfare of our children and young people.

SCEA's Code of Conduct sets out the ethical behaviour expected of us. It will assist every employee in solving ethical dilemmas they may face in their working environment.

Commitment to an ethical culture within our Association involves us capturing opportunities to increase the awareness of SCEA's Code of Conduct and making it part of our daily business decisions and actions. It is up to all of us to ensure the Code of Conduct becomes part of the operational fabric of our Association. Successfully implemented, this Code of Conduct will result in:

- (a) More effective compliance with relevant laws;
- (b) More effective management;
- (c) Greater awareness of ensuring the safety of all children in our care, and
- (d) Maintenance of the integrity and reputation of SCEA.

The Association Code of Conduct outlines our key values and our expectations of staff in our workplace environment. We have an additional expectation of every person within our Association (including Board Directors, students, volunteers, contractors, parents and guardians) to uphold the key values and expectations of this Code of Conduct when acting on behalf of or representing SCEA.

Yours Sincerely,

Graeme Cross
CEO

Background

SCEA exists to partner with families and communities to provide Christ-centred education to help shape and grow future generations. As Christians, we aim to model unity and glorify God in all we do. As educators, our focus is on delivering the best educational outcomes for our students and serving their welfare.

One of the strengths of SCEA is its volunteers' strong commitment to making a difference to the future wellbeing of children, to the moral and economic success of Western Australia, and to the future of our nation.

This Code of Conduct clarifies the standards of behaviour that are expected of SCEA volunteers. It gives guidance in areas where volunteers need to make personal and ethical decisions.

It makes clear that, in addition to their legal duties under various laws, employees are required at all times to demonstrate ethical conduct that is consistent with biblical Christian principles and the following SCEA values:

Strive to be Christlike

- We aspire to the values exhibited by Jesus: truth; grace; hope; faith; love; justice; joy; service and peace.

Pursue excellence

- All we do is to the Glory of God; we have a thirst for learning and growth that fuels continuous improvement.

Seek unity

- To further our mission, we converge on positions that strengthen the SCEA system.

Have the courage to shine

- We aspire to our highest potential, live by our biblical convictions and shine a light into others' lives.

This Code of Conduct:

Sets out principles the Association expects its volunteers to follow and observe in everyday life.

Responsibility in this context means that each individual takes responsibility for their actions. High ethical standards flow from the concept of us being "responsible" for our actions. Each individual who is a part of our Association is expected to take responsibility for their own actions. This is a key part of our operational process.

There is no right way to do the wrong thing. Behaving in an ethical manner and in accordance with our key values is vital to the SCEA's success. Applying this Code of Conduct ensures our Association maintains a high ethical standard, which reinforces one of our key assets, our reputation.

Scope

This policy covers all sites owned and/or operated by Swan Christian Education Association Incorporated (SCEA). All members of SCEA staff, contractors and volunteers must comply with this policy.

Context

This policy is written in compliance with and/or linked to:

- a) **Australian Standard 2002-2003 'Organisational Code of Conduct'.**
- b) ***Standards and Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools in Western Australia, 2020, Standards 4, 8, and 10.***
- c) ***SCEA Child Safe Policy and Framework, including SCEA's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, SCEA Excursion and Incursion Policy, SCEA Child Protection and Mandatory Reporting Policy, SCEA Duty of Care Policy and SCEA Privacy Policy.***
- d) ***SCEA Child Protection for Volunteers and Third-Party Contract Workers Policy.***

The Association may, from time to time, review and update this policy to take account of changes to the Association's operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing legal and school environment.

Definitions

Regular Volunteer - one who attends the school or school-related activity at regular period intervals during a school year or who is frequently called on to assist in diverse capacities.

Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing regular support, guidance and supervision that involves face to face, written or electronic communication directly to students, and could potentially have direct, unsupervised contact (physical and/or verbal) with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students or communication with students.

Policy Statement

All SCEA volunteers will

- Comply with this Volunteer Code of Conduct
- Be supervised at all times by school staff
- Have a Working With Children Check Card if volunteering as a Regular and/or Direct Contact Volunteer*
- Undergo a National Police Check or Reference checks if requested by the school
- Be familiar with the SCEA *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety*
- Undergo *SCEA Child Protection Training for Volunteers* as arranged by the school
- Contribute to the safety and protection of children in school environments
- Not be alone with a child (apart from their own) in an area where they can't be seen or observed by a staff member or other adult (including a vehicle unless permission is given by the principal to transport a student)
- Report child abuse and grooming behaviours if suspected/observed, to the principal or other school leader, immediately.

**Note that parents undertaking voluntary work at the school in which their child is enrolled and with their child's class, do not require a WWC Card unless assisting on an overnight camp or excursion. Other exemptions include volunteers who are under 18 years of age (including students on work placement), short term visitors to WA¹*

Procedures

Regular and Direct Contact Volunteers may have:

- limited supervision by school staff in their role;
- significant amounts of 1 on1 time with students;
- supervisory responsibility for a group of students with only broad and indirect oversight of a school staff member; or
- full supervisory responsibility for one or more students, such as in a sports coaching role or learning support role.

Examples of Regular and/or Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in school camps or excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

All Regular and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to adhere to our Statement of Commitment to child Safety and Child Protection Policies.

Principals must ensure that all Volunteers having direct contact with students, undergo child protection training (see ***Child Protection for Direct Contact Volunteers and Third-Party Contract***

¹ <https://workingwithchildren.wa.gov.au/about/categories-of-child-related-work>

Workers Policy). This should be part of the volunteer's induction process that introduces them to the workplace. This process should begin within two weeks of their commencing work on site and give them an understanding and appreciation of the specific requirements of their task and knowledge of the functions of the school.

They must also be aware that they too have legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and grooming behaviours.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of abuse and grooming, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child protection with the CEO and/or with external agencies where required. This information is provided in *the Volunteers Child Protection Training Module* available from the SCEA Intranet.

Direct Contact Volunteers can also direct questions about child protection at the school of one of the school's Child Protection Officers.

Indirect Contact Volunteers

Indirect Contact Volunteers are not responsible for supervising students and would not have "unsupervised" contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting with school functions, the school canteen (not serving students) and fundraising or sporting event barbeques.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in school environments.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are required by the Association to be familiar with our *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Child Protection Policies*.

The Association expects all volunteers to comply with our Child Safety Code of Conduct

SCEA has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all individuals interacting with children and young people within our System Office community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, SCEA Board SCEA Directors, Volunteers (direct and indirect), Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/guardians. The System Office's SCEA Board of Directors has approved this Child Safety Code of Conduct.

DO

- Uphold SCEA's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety at all times.
- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.

- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Comply with guidelines published by the SCEA Office with respect to child protection, specifically SCEA's *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety*
- Treat all students with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Use positive and affirming language toward students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Code of Conduct.
- Refer all student concerns or behaviour issues to their supervising teacher.
- Refer all requests to access school files/information to their supervising teacher.
- Sign the school's visitor book on arrival and departure.
- Wear any provided name badge at all times.
- Report concerns about child safety to the principal and/or CEO and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- Ensure as quickly as possible that where an allegation of child abuse or grooming is made, the student involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if they have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a 'need to know'.
- Promote positive actions and relationship-based discussions on Biblical perspectives.

DO NOT

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views (that may contradict our Statement of Faith) on cultures, race, Sexuality, ethnicity or disability in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, sexuality, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism or grooming

(for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).

- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Publicly share students' images, full names, and/or details of clubs or groups they may attend, without parental consent.
- Post publicly online, on social media, or outside of learning-related systems any information about a student that may allow them to be contacted: for example, their e-mail address; telephone number or home address.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse or grooming.
- Invite a student or students to your home.
- Transport a student in your car without permission of the principal.
- Be alone with a student (other than your own child) in a space that cannot be seen/observed by another adult.

Schools have the right to expect and require volunteers to:

- Be reliable
- Be punctual
- Respect confidentiality and privacy
- Carry out the volunteer position/task that was agreed
- Be accountable for the tasks given
- Be committed to working for the school
- Have a willingness to undertake required training
- Recognise their own limitations and be willing to ask for help and support when needed
- Be supportive of other volunteers and an ability to work in a team
- Be prepared to follow all relevant school policies and procedures
- Give adequate notice if they can't make it and before leaving the school

Working with Children Check (WWC) Card

Standard 4 of the Non-Government School Registration Standards requires that all non-teaching staff, non-parent volunteers, and regular volunteers who undertake a recurring professional role at the school must have a WWC Check and have their WWC Card details recorded and maintained by the school.

Parent Volunteer Exemption

Under the Education Act parent volunteers in most categories of child-related work are exempt from obtaining a WWC Check – except for overnight camps – if their own child (under 18 years of age) is involved in the same setting or activity.

The parent volunteer exemption is applied differently depending on the category of child-related work. Parent volunteers are exempt when their child is enrolled at the school. While parents are exempt from having a WWC Check if their own child is involved in the activity, they must obtain a

WWC Check if they volunteer at an activity where their child is not involved or if it involves an overnight stay.

Implementation

Awareness and Training

All SCEA Volunteers and direct-contact Third Party Contract Workers are required to undertake training in child protection obligations prior to volunteering at a SCEA learning site. Principals are responsible for arranging this training through *the SCEA Child Protection Training for Volunteers*.

Compliance with the Law

All employees must be familiar with the basic legal requirements that apply to their duties and responsibilities. The Association will provide resources to assist employees to become familiar with their legal obligations.

Reporting Unethical Behaviour

It is important that all SCEA Volunteers take responsibility for ensuring that the standards contained in this Code of Conduct are translated into action. This means that if a violation comes to your attention you are required to take some action, since 'turning a blind eye' is a way of contributing to an unethical situation. Therefore, volunteers each have a responsibility to report unethical behaviour.

Volunteers must bring the matter of any observed unethical behaviour to the attention of a School Leader. In circumstances where this is inappropriate the matter should be reported to the Principal, or if the matter involves the Principal, to the CEO.

Breaches of Code of Conduct

For breaches of the Code of Conduct relating to inappropriate behaviours towards children and young people, the school must ensure that the best interests of the child are of paramount concern. This may result in the involvement of Department of Child Protection and Family Support.

The Board Chair and/or CEO and/or Principal is responsible for ensuring that victimisation of those reporting or making allegations of breaches to the Code of Conduct, does not occur. Whistle-blowers are protected under the law. (see SCEA Whistle-blower Policy)

Volunteer Induction Checklist

An example of a checklist that school might use can be found at **Appendix 1**.

Contact Person

Chief Education Officer

Appendix 1 – Volunteer Induction Checklist (example)

Prior to commencement of volunteer work:

1. Plan a volunteer Induction Program
2. Make arrangements for the volunteer to either be sent relevant child protection policies or undertake the *Child Protection Volunteer Training Module* developed by the SCEA Office, and to generate a Statutory Declaration form for the school's records
3. Confirm the volunteer understands the expectations, obligations and protocols of the school
4. Consider providing a mentor for the volunteer if possible
5. Inform staff and students (if necessary) of the starting date and role of the volunteer
6. Ensure the volunteer understands policy regarding the use of school equipment e.g. IT, learning technologies, phones
7. Provide the volunteer with a map of the premises
8. Discuss emergency procedures with the volunteer
9. If required, explain the use of TASS in marking and keeping rolls up to date
10. Identify for the volunteer key school staff including first-aid officer, fire warden, librarian