



Huntly PS Classroom Helpers and Volunteers Handbook

Research has shown that parents who take an active role in their child's school life increase their child's ability to learn and have a positive effect on academic achievement.

At Huntly Primary we encourage parents to actively support student learning by becoming involved in a range of school and classroom activities and greatly appreciate the parents and community members who assist and support our programs.

Programs and activities may include:

- Listening to students read.
- Supporting class activities such as cooking, arts and crafts etc.
- Attending excursions and camps.
- Providing administrative support, such as laminating teaching aids and covering library books.
- Supporting fundraising activities.
- Participating in school activities such as Book Week, open mornings, classroom celebrations.
- Joining School Council or one of the sub-committees

Classroom Helpers and Volunteer Workers

When parents/carers assist with school programs they are classed as **volunteers** working at the school. Any person whose duties usually involve or are likely to involve work in a school (paid or unpaid) is considered to be engaged in 'child-related work' and must be compliant with the Working with Children Act 2005 (the Act).

A duty of care applies while students are under the care of the school. This duty applies equally to school based activities and out of school activities. The same duty of care applies to employees and volunteers who assist at the school.

Classroom helpers/staff support/volunteer workers are expected to assist the programs within the following guidelines:

- Treat all students in a positive, impartial and fair manner.
- Work under the direction of the teacher who is responsible for the class or group of children.
- Refer any behaviour management issues to the classroom teacher, as he/she will then determine what course of action is to be followed.
- Operate within **professional standards** and **confidentiality**. Classroom helpers are in a position of trust and should not discuss with other parents, adults or children any personal information about students, staff or other classroom helpers learnt whilst involved in school programs.
- Obtain a **Working with Children** check for volunteers, as they are considered to be engaged in 'child-related work' and must be compliant with the Working with Children Act 2005.
- Be willing to assist all children or group of children within the classroom. This could mean that you may not always work with your child.

Code of Conduct

At Huntly Primary we have high expectations of our Parent Community. We expect all parents will:

- Promote a positive attitude towards learning.
- Encourage their child to demonstrate positive behaviours and appropriate conflict resolution strategies – e.g. informing the teacher if there is a problem.
- Support school decisions regarding behaviour management.

- Ensure all interactions are respectful and appropriate language is used at all times within the school grounds.
- Contact the school if they have a question or are unsure of something.

Huntly Primary Procedures

- Classroom helpers and Volunteers need to provide the school with a Working with Children's Check. A register of parent helpers with a copy will of their WWCC will be kept at the office. **A receipt of application is acceptable until the official check is delivered.**
- Classroom helpers and Volunteers sign in and sign out of the school using the sign-in book located at the front office.
- Classroom helpers and Volunteers will be given a Huntly Primary lanyard to wear, indicating to staff and students that they are allowed to be in the school.

Guidelines for Classroom Helpers and Volunteers

Huntly Primary School Values

Resilience, Collaboration & Community, Respect

The following guidelines are provided to support classroom helpers and volunteers.

Language	Use encouraging/positive words. Adopt a pleasant tone of voice. Use warm, open body language.
Relationships	Set a good example. For example, look at and listen to the teacher when he/she speaks. Give students opportunities for decision making by offering limited and appropriate choices. For example, "Which book would you like to read?"
Physical contact	Accept child-initiated contact where appropriate. For example, a child who high-fives you every time they see you. Redirect child-initiated contact where that contact is inappropriate. For example, a student who wants to cling on to your leg as you walk around the classroom. Reinforce <i>Hugs are for Home.</i> Discuss any concerns about appropriate contact with the class teacher.
Dress Code	Wear appropriate clothing for anticipated role and activities. When in doubt about a situation ask, the class teacher or Principal.

Emergency Procedures

The School is committed to ensuring the safety, health and wellbeing of its staff, students, parents, volunteers and visitors. The School has Emergency and Security Management systems in place. As a volunteer / parent helper it is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with the School's Emergency procedures.

Summary of Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Plans are located within buildings throughout the school.

If you have any question please ask the teacher.

Child Safety Induction Pack- Volunteers

Please read the Child Safety Induction Pack-Volunteers document (and key documents linked) on our school website www.huntly-ps.vic.edu.au/wordpress/ or contact the school office for a hard copy

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

What name do the children use when addressing parent helpers in the classroom?

It depends, some parents like to be called by their first name (Mary, Peter,..) while others prefer to be addressed using their formal name (Mrs Brown, Mr White.). The class teacher will normally discuss this with you. Whichever name is chosen, the most important factor is that the children speak to you with respect.

Where can I apply for a Working With Children Check, and how much does it cost?

Applications for a working with children's check can be made at the local post office or online at <http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> Applicants need to supply a passport photo with their application. There is no cost for a **Working With Children Check** for volunteers. Although it may take several weeks for a Working With Children check to be processed, **parents are able to be parent helpers once they have a receipt for their Working With Children check.**

What do I need to do when I arrive at school as a classroom helper/volunteer?

All visitors to Huntly Primary are asked to sign in at the office. You will be given a Huntly Primary lanyard to wear. Please sign out again when you leave school.

What is the usual time commitment for classroom helpers/volunteers in the classroom?

Individual class teachers and parent helpers jointly organise the time and type of support that best suits both parties. Parent helpers who listen to students read usually come weekly, but this can vary depending on your availability and the class program. The School appreciates any assistance classroom helpers and volunteers are able to provide.

What do I do if I'm unable to make it to my weekly time?

Class teachers appreciate it if you can let them know if you won't be available. Either jot a brief note and send it in with your child or phone the school office Ph: 54488866 and leave a message. Teachers understand that there are many times when your routine will change.

Who is responsible for classroom management in the classroom?

The classroom teacher is always responsible for classroom management. If you are assisting in a small group or individual situation and a student is behaving inappropriately, advise the classroom teacher. It is important for the students to know that the teacher is responsible for behaviour.

What if it is my child who is behaving inappropriately?

This is always a sensitive area. Some students react differently when their mum or dad are in the room. If possible, advise the classroom teacher at the time. If this behaviour continues speak to the classroom teacher out of class time to decide on the best course of action.

I can't help on a weekly basis but I would like to come into the classroom when I have odd days off work. Is this possible?

Teachers always appreciate extra help in the classroom. Where possible a little notice will allow the best use of your time.

The classroom that I help out in is quite noisy at times. When I went to school the students worked in silence. Is it OK to have a noisy classroom?

Classrooms have changed a great deal since our school days. Students have many opportunities to work with other students, talk and discuss their learning. The teacher will monitor noise levels in the classroom to ensure they are suitable for the activity being undertaken at the time.

I have noticed that children are on different reading levels. What do they mean? I would like my child to move up a few levels should I see their teacher?

Reading levels are a tool the teachers use to match a child to a book that is most appropriate for their instructional learning. There are many factors that go into determining a student's level.

Comprehension is one of the most important elements. When students can read a book they also need to be able to understand what they have read. Home readers should be at an easier level than what they read in the classroom.

If you have any concerns or questions about readers you should make a time to meet with your child's class teacher

Classroom Helper and Volunteer Worker Agreement

I have read and agree to comply with the guidelines contained in the Huntly PS Classroom Helper and Volunteer Worker Handbook.

Name

Contact Details

Emergency Contact Details (name and relationship to that person)

.....

Child's Name Grade

Child's Name Grade

Child's Name Grade

Child's Name Grade

Signature:..... **Date:**

Huntly Primary School must have received the signed Classroom Helper and Volunteer Worker Agreement and a copy of the **Working With Children Clearance**, prior to commencing any voluntary work within the school and classrooms.