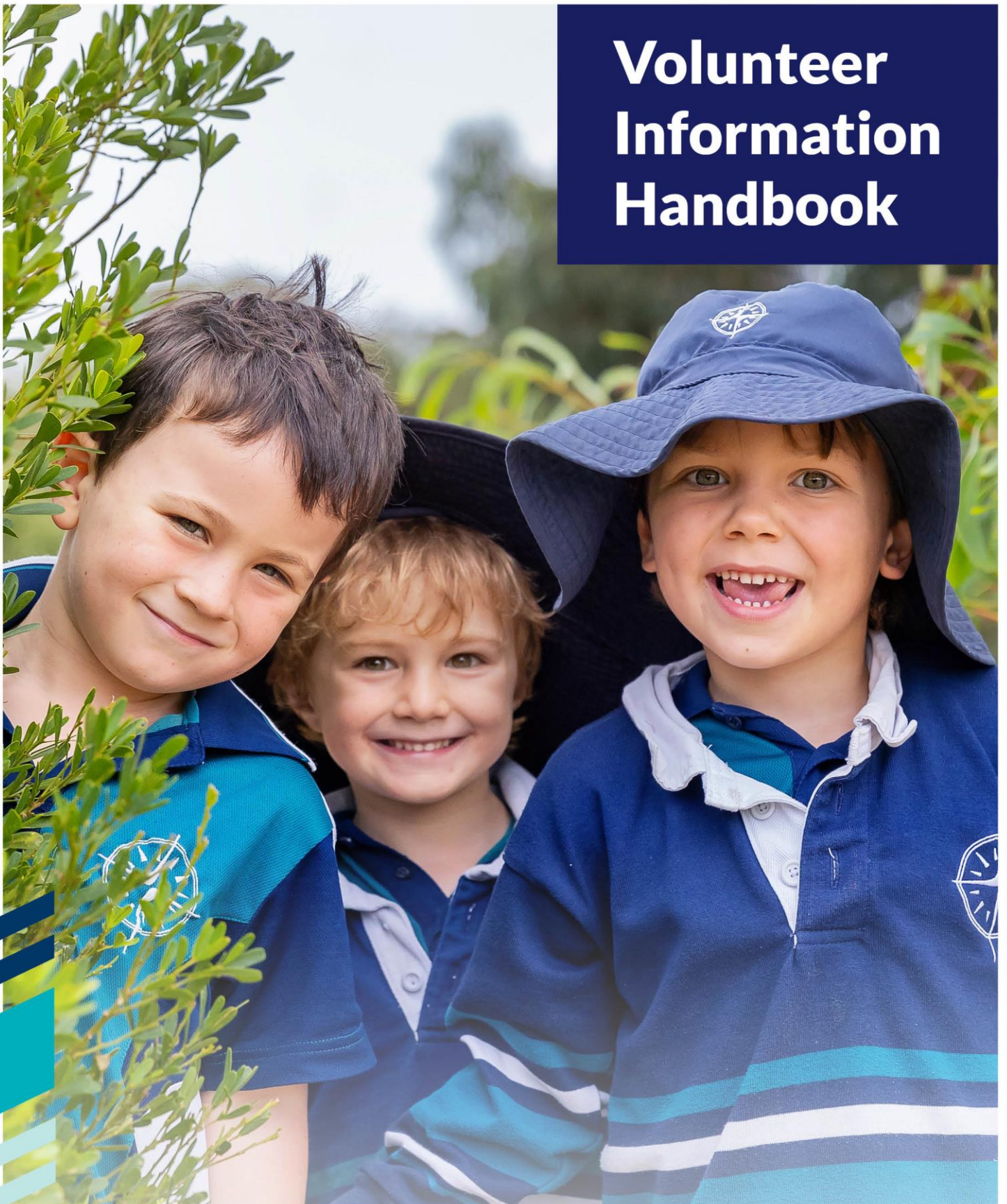


# Volunteer Information Handbook



Investigator  
College

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## Introduction

Here at Investigator College, we are incredibly grateful for our volunteers, who give their time to further the education of students and create a positive learning environment. Volunteers make a significant contribution to many of our programs, activities and excursions.

This booklet provides essential information on becoming a volunteer, maintaining your role as a volunteer, and the responsibilities and obligations of volunteers assisting the school. We have developed it to guide both volunteers and staff when it comes to the conduct and onboarding of volunteers.

The protection of our students is paramount. This booklet has been developed in the context of legislative requirements in relation to child protection, including the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017.

## Who are our volunteers?

Any person who donates their time to work at the school and has direct contact with students, or works in the presence of students, is considered a volunteer.

Many Investigator College volunteers are parents/caregivers of students.

## Volunteer selection process

Volunteers will be assessed for their suitability to work at the school by the Principal/Nominee. This assessment is made in relation to the skills and contributions being offered and only after verification of the person's good character.

To be considered for volunteer work at Investigator College, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Must not have ever been in breach of another organisation's child safe, vulnerable persons policy or code of conduct (or similar).
2. Must disclose if they have ever been under any organisation's investigations or disciplinary procedures relating to child/vulnerable persons protection or code of conduct.
3. Must disclose if they have ever had concerns raised about their behaviour towards children or vulnerable persons.
4. Must not have ever been subject to an investigation or convicted of a criminal offence relating to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
5. Hold a valid Volunteer Working With Children Check and RRHAN-EC Certificate.

## Investigator College's responsibility to volunteers

- A staff member will be allocated by the Principal/Nominee as the volunteer's supervisor in each area that he/she works. This will normally be the staff member that the volunteer works alongside, unless otherwise advised.
- Accurate records will be kept of a volunteer's training and work details, as per above.
- Volunteers may be provided with induction training that could include:
  - Workplace Health and Safety Training
  - Duty of Care Responsibilities

- Food Safety Training
- Confidentiality requirements
- Training specific to the area of volunteer work.
- Volunteers will be matched with work that is suitable to their skills, interests, time commitments and health status.
- Changes to a volunteer's work will be made only after consultation with the volunteer.
- Supervising Investigator College staff, the Human Resources Manager, and the Principal/Nominee will be available to discuss a volunteer's concerns, should they arise.
- The school will notify the volunteer, in advance, when their WWCC screening and/or RRHAN is due to expire.

## Volunteer requirements and approval process

Persons wishing to become a volunteer at Investigator College are required to follow these steps (in order):

Action to take		Document	Refer to...
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the online Responding to Risk of Harm Abuse & Neglect - Education and Care Training course	RRHAN-EC	Page 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete and provide a valid Working With Children Check	WWCC	Page 6
<input type="checkbox"/>	Read this document then complete an online volunteer agreement form (attaching your RRHAN-EC)	Volunteer registration form	Investigator College website

Depending on the role being undertaken, a volunteer may also be required to undertake additional training. The Principal/Nominee's decision in determining eligibility to work as a volunteer at Investigator College is final.

## Volunteer responsibilities

Volunteers are expected to ensure that:

- They are not alone with a student out of the sight of an Investigator College staff member
- They are not involved in toileting students or assisting in change rooms and sick rooms
- They do not have intentional physical contact with students
- They do not display intimidating behaviour towards students
- They speak positively to students
- They refer all student concerns or behavioural issues to the supervising teacher
- They refer all requests to access school files through the supervising teacher
- They sign in and out at the front office on arrival and departure (during school hours) when working on site, or sign in and out with the supervising teacher when working off site (e.g. excursion)
- They wear the allocated volunteer lanyard
- They notify the school as early as possible should they be unable to fulfil their commitment
- They respond to emails/communications from the school in a timely manner
- They abide by the Investigator College Parent Code of Conduct.

## Cancellation agreement

If concerns arise about a volunteer, opportunities to remedy the problem will be offered where appropriate. A volunteer's Agreement can be cancelled at the Principal/Nominee's discretion and where the volunteer:

- Has no more suitable work available
- Fails to follow requirements outlined in this policy
- Behaves towards students, parents or staff in a manner deemed inappropriate or improper
- Repeatedly fails to meet commitments without notice to the school.

## Becoming a current, registered volunteer

A person who has completed all the process below, and whose **WWCC** and **RRHAN-EC** certifications are in a valid date range, is called a **current registered Investigator College volunteer**.

Only a current registered Investigator College volunteer is to undertake volunteer activities in and on behalf of Investigator College. This includes (but is not limited to) such activities as:

- Accompanying students on excursions
- Supporting student sporting events
- Listening to morning reading
- Assisting in the canteen
- Helping at school events such as Open Day
- Working with the Parents and Friends Association on any event, including being a PFA representative.

Investigator College encourages all parents/caregivers or other family members who think they may wish to act as a volunteer in the future to complete their volunteer application and clearances early. Getting a WWCC can sometimes take as long as 6 to 8 weeks.

The front office is the main point of contact for questions about your volunteer status.

## Staying current

The front office will send an email to a volunteer three months prior to the expiration date of a volunteer's WWCC or RRHAN-EC. This email will advise the volunteer what to do to remain current. It is then the volunteer's responsibility to provide the required updated documentation. Once either of these documents has expired, the volunteer will remain on the database but will not be able to act in any volunteer capacity.

Volunteers are reviewed at the end of each school year. Any volunteer who is a parent/caregiver and will have no children at Investigator College in the next year will be removed from the 'current' list. If you fall into this category and wish to remain a current volunteer, you will need to speak directly to the Human Resources Manager.

## Obtaining or renewing a Working With Children Check – mandatory for volunteers

Below we have outlined the steps to follow to complete your Working with Children Check via Investigator College:

- Read this document through, then complete the **Become a Volunteer** digital application form on the website. Alternatively, click the link to the **Volunteer Renewal** digital form to update your documents.
- If you already hold a current WWCC with at least six months' validity, provide this when completing either of the above digital forms.
- If you do not hold a current Working With Children Check, we will initiate the online application process for your Working with Children Check (WWCC) once we receive your application to **Become a Volunteer**,
- Once Investigator College has initiated the Working With Children Check application process, the applicant will receive an email from the Department of Human Services (DHS) screening unit providing login instructions. The applicant can then complete their application online. If you have any queries regarding the process, please contact Dan McCartney, Human Resources Manager: [dmccartney@investigator.sa.edu.au](mailto:dmccartney@investigator.sa.edu.au)
- More information relating to the screening process can be found here: [screening.sa.gov.au](https://screening.sa.gov.au)

## Responding to Abuse & Neglect (RRHAN-EC) Training – mandatory for volunteers

All Investigator College volunteers are required to complete the Responding to Risk of Harm, Abuse and Neglect - Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) online course for volunteers. To complete this mandatory requirement, please follow this link: [Fundamentals course: Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care.](#)

This is to have been completed **before** completing the Investigator College Become a Volunteer Registration link.

Training is via an online portal called "Plink" accessible via the above link. If you have completed RRHAN Training in the past, you may already have a Plink account. Otherwise, please create your account then access the training.

Upon completion of the RRHAN-EC training course, provide a copy of your certificate (preferably emailed as a PDF file, or printed in colour) to Dan McCartney, Human Resources Manager: [dmccartney@investigator.sa.edu.au](mailto:dmccartney@investigator.sa.edu.au)

**Note:** the 2024 RRHAN-EC course has been issued by the Department for Education and is a mandatory requirement for all volunteers. All new RRHAN-EC Certificates have an expiry date of 31 Dec 2027. We are no longer accepting the RRHAN Certificates that expire in 2024.

# Processes and protocols

## Being alone with students

To ensure your safety and the safety of our students, you should be within sight of a member of staff/adult when working alone with an individual student. Do not shut or lock a door so that you are in a room alone with a student. You will not be required to mind a class in the absence of a teacher.

## Communication

Please remember that you are acting as a role model to the students who observe you. Your language and topics of conversation should be appropriate to the age at which you are working and of a professional manner.

## Emergency/ evacuation

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, there may be an initial 'alert tone' which is an ascending siren. If you hear this tone, stay calm and identify your nearest exit. Please make your way to the main oval, check in with a warden wearing a white hat and be ready for further instruction.

In the event of an emergency requiring a 'lock down' of the premises, there will be a signal which is a 'beeping siren'. In the event you hear this siren played, you will be required to lock yourself in a safe room or building, close all blinds and curtains, turn off all lights and ensure the doors are locked or act as directed by a warden. Remain in lockdown mode until the siren ceases.

If you discover an emergency situation outside of business hours, you should raise the alarm by breaking the glass and activating the fire alarm button, and then evacuate to the main oval and await the arrival of the emergency services.

## First aid

If a student is injured or ill, please advise the supervising teacher/class teacher or front office as soon as possible. Our front office staff or another staff member will provide first aid and/or comfort to an injured or distressed student and contact parents if necessary.

## Physical contact with students

Please avoid unnecessarily touching students unless there is a genuine emergency, as this can be seen as inappropriate in some cultures as well as making the children feel uncomfortable.

## Policies & guidelines

A range of policies and documents relating to the school and its operation can be found on the Investigator College website here: [Policy and Governance — Investigator College](#). These include our Child Safe Policy, Parent Code of Conduct, Privacy Policy, Complaints Handling Policy, and Behavioural Expectation Policy.

Any policies, procedures or guidelines relating specifically to your volunteer role will be discussed with you by your Investigator College supervisor.

## Privacy & confidentiality

Schools are required to comply with Australian Privacy Legislation regarding the use and release of information. Any personal information (including names, addresses, telephone numbers, circumstances or situations of any nature) about students, staff and volunteers of which you become aware during your volunteer work must not be shared, unless it is required by law, for example, if it is relevant for reporting alleged child abuse. Please avoid making any comments about the use of individual teaching methodologies, student behaviour or specific students to other people.

## Record keeping

We need to know who is in the school at any one time, especially in the case of an emergency. You will be required to 'sign in' and 'sign out' and will be provided with a volunteer lanyard that must be worn at all times. This lanyard is to be returned when you sign out.

- If you are undertaking duties **on site (i.e. not leaving Investigator College grounds)**, please sign in/out at the front office and collect your volunteer lanyard there.
- If you are attending **an excursion or local walk (i.e. where you will be leaving the Investigator College grounds)**, please report to the organising teacher/staff member to sign in/out. They will provide you with a volunteer lanyard.

## Responding to risk of harm, abuse and neglect (mandatory notification)

Under section 30 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, as a volunteer you are obliged by law to notify Families SA if you suspect that a child (under the age of 18) has been abused or neglected. If your volunteer work is with children (under 18 years), you are a **mandated notifier**. This means you need to understand how to notify and report suspected child abuse. All ongoing volunteers must complete mandatory notification training and keep it current. This includes people on a governing council.

A **mandated** reporter/notifier must make a report/notification to the Department for Child Protection **Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)** if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is, or may be, at risk of harm. A mandated reporter/notifier does not have to be able to prove that harm has actually occurred.



If you require any advice, you can contact the following organisations:

- Child Protection Services at the WCH on 8161 7346
- Flinders Medical Centre on 8204 5485.

Do not question those involved as this could compromise an investigation. The law does not require that you prove your suspicions, but it does require that you report them. Please consult the Principal or member of the Senior Leadership Team for advice if you feel the need.

### Definitions of abuse:

- Physical abuse: any physical injury inflicted upon a child.
- Sexual abuse: any sexual behaviour imposed on a child.
- Emotional abuse: a chronic attitude or behaviour towards a child which is detrimental to or impairs the child's emotional and/or physical development.
- Neglect: any serious omission or commission by a person which jeopardises or impairs the child's physical, intellectual or emotional development.

All volunteers at Investigator College are required to have undergone RRHAN-EC training (see separate section above).

## Sexual & racial harassment & bullying

Under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984, it is unlawful to subject a student, a fellow employee or volunteer worker to sexual or racial harassment. The Principal or other members of the Senior Leadership Team will investigate any reports of sexual or racial harassment or bullying.

Harassment and bullying consist of acts or behaviours which are directed against individuals or groups and which are experienced as insulting, offensive, demeaning, humiliating, or intimidating. It can include belittling comments, ridicule, graffiti, name-calling, put-down jokes, attacks on property, exclusion, and physical violence.

## Smoking

Smoking is not permitted in buildings or school grounds, including car parks. Smoking is also not permitted by volunteers when supervising children, whether on site or off site (e.g. on excursions).

## Student behaviour

We expect students to always treat you with respect and courtesy. If students behave inappropriately, you should remind them of the correct behaviour and help them make the right choice. If the behaviour continues, please seek help from the supervising staff member or class teacher.

## Toilets

Please use the staff toilets, and do not enter toilets allocated for student use. You will not be required to assist with the toileting of students, nor with sickroom duties.

## Volunteer information

Volunteers play an important role at Investigator College. Your participation in the work of the school is greatly appreciated and valued. While the welfare of our students is our highest priority, we want to do everything possible to ensure your involvement is a rewarding and worthwhile experience. This information is provided to inform you of your role and to ensure our students are safe and protected, as well as to strengthen our partnership with you. Volunteers who have close contact with students (e.g. sports coaches, reading volunteers, canteen volunteers, and those who assist at camps or excursions) will receive training and extra information where necessary, such as specific skills, safe practices and information on students who have medical conditions – all of which is discussed in confidence with you.

## Workplace health & safety

The school is responsible for providing a safe working environment. You are asked to take reasonable responsibility for your own health and safety and avoid the possibility of an accident or injury while you are at school. Special care is needed when lifting heavy objects. Please do not become involved in any activity which is likely to put you, a student or anyone else at risk. Please familiarise yourself with the emergency procedure for evacuation (can be found by the door of each room) and report all observed risks, injuries and accidents occurring whilst at the school to the staff member responsible for that activity as soon as possible.