



# **SASKATOON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**

## **Volunteer Handbook**

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## **Introduction**

Welcome to Saskatoon Christian School! And thank you for your interest in volunteering.

Volunteers make a difference! Volunteer participation will be an opportunity for you to share with others in the enrichment of the education of our students. As a volunteer you will discover the rewards of helping students achieve their personal best and at the same time experience personal satisfaction and gain useful experience yourself.

Everyone at SCS is very much enriched by the incredible involvement of our volunteers. Your participation in individual classrooms, grade levels, and school-wide activities makes us stand out. As well, the school benefits from your fundraising and financial support. We welcome your involvement and encourage you to help us provide an even greater educational experience for all of our children.

This handbook was written as a guide for the volunteers of Saskatoon Christian School. It is our sincer hope you reap personal rewards of satisfaction and joy from volunteering at our school.



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## What Do Volunteers Do?

A volunteer is a parent or other person who has made an accepted commitment to assist the school without expectation of compensation.

A **volunteer** includes, but is not limited to, a coach, a driver, a regular classroom helper and a trip chaperone.

A **visitor** is an individual who enters the school who is not an employee or volunteer. A visitor includes, but is not limited to, a one-time speaker, an individual making a delivery, and anyone attending a meeting with a teacher or an administrator.

Volunteers perform many different tasks at SCS. The tasks may include but not be limited to the following:

- Field trips
- Special events
- Classroom support
- Resource room support
- Library support
- Hot lunch program and canteens
- Drivers for school trips
- Reading programs
- Assisting with noon hour and playground supervision
- Assisting teachers with teaching materials
- Classroom cleanup
- Coaching
- Project work for staff
- School beautification
- Fundraising
- Tutoring
- Communications
- Chaperones

## What Should a Volunteer Expect

A school volunteer should:

- Believe that the assistance given is worthwhile and contributes to the overall value of the program in which they are participating;
- Be treated with respect and consideration by all students and staff;
- Be given clear instructions and any training necessary for particular volunteer assignments;
- Be given proper orientation to the school with introductions to key personnel and information provided as to parking, storage of personal items, washroom and coffee/lunch facilities;
- Be part of two-way communication with staff (i.e. discussion time or email exchange for ongoing direction and feedback);
- Be provided with direct support from staff if difficulties arise.

## What is Expected of a School Volunteer?

A school volunteer has the following responsibilities:

- Remember that school administration has ultimate responsibility for all personnel, policies and programs in the school, including volunteers;

- Follow all SCS policies
- Be reliable. Accepting a school volunteer assignment means a commitment to be there - promptly and on schedule. Also, notifying the school in advance if you do have to be absent;
- Assist under the direction of qualified staff following their instruction closely. Work only with those staff members who request your help and work only with students referred to by those staff members;
- Remember that volunteers are in the school to assist and supplement - not replace the role of paid staff;
- Be receptive to, and participate in, orientation, training and meetings with staff, as offered;
- Remember you are a role model for students and the school community;
- Maintain the highest standards of confidentiality and ethics;
- Support SCS and students in a way that fosters respect among all members of the school community.

## **Guidelines for Volunteers**

- Share your experiences and talents. Let the teacher know in which area you excel (telling stories, singing, playing instruments, handcrafts, computer use, photography, etc.);
- Ask questions freely about programs, policies and equipment at a time appropriate both for the staff member and for yourself. Follow the staff member's established procedures. Talk to the teacher about any difficulties at appropriate times, not in front of students or parents;
- Learn the names of students you are working with;
- Speak in a positive way to students – point out the things they have done right, the things they do well;
- Report inappropriate student behaviour to the supervising teacher or an administrator.

## **School Volunteers Policy**

Saskatoon Christian School believes that a child's education is enhanced by the involvement of school volunteers. An effective volunteer program allows students to benefit from individual attention, provides enrichment opportunities that supplement the regular educational program, allows teachers to focus on teaching and learning by relieving them of non-teaching tasks, provides interested community members an opportunity to become directly involved with education, and strengthens the relationship between SCS and the school community.

SCS approves the use of volunteers to support the school system's instructional programs and extracurricular activities and will provide a wide range of opportunities for volunteer involvement.

The purpose of this policy is to establish operational guidelines and procedures to ensure the delivery of a safe and effective volunteer program. Appropriate safeguards respecting the

selection, role, and supervision of volunteers is critical to ensuring SCS is a safe, secure, and caring environment for students.

SCS, through its staff, must maintain control of school programs and school-sponsored activities. This policy applies to all staff who supervise and/or are supported by a volunteer.

## **Volunteer Code of Ethics**

- Confidentiality is of the utmost importance in the school setting in order to ensure that the dignity and worth of students, parents, volunteers and school staff is honoured.
- Any information collected, used, generated, and stored by SCS including student, instructional, financial, or administrative information is strictly confidential and is to be used only in the performance of volunteer duties.
- You may not disclose, communicate, publish, remove, alter, copy, interfere with, or destroy any information unless you are specifically authorized to do so by the supervising teacher or school administration.
- Gossip is a negative, harmful and unacceptable form of communication that is not condoned by the school administration.
- Failure of a volunteer to follow the policies of SCS can result in termination of a volunteer's position.
- You must notify the principal of any new criminal charges at the time the charge is made.
- The teaching staff and school administrators are responsible for student learning and discipline.
- As a volunteer, you can assist greatly in enhancing student learning by working positively and co-operatively with the school team.
- Volunteers are encouraged to discuss any concerns that may arise with the classroom/supervising teacher or school administrator.
- Volunteers should ask for clarification of any instructions or procedures they are unclear about.
- Volunteers should refer students who misbehave to the teacher in charge.
- Volunteer time should not be used to discuss your child's behaviour or progress. Appointments can be made with the teacher regarding these matters.

## **Protection of Students**

SCS recognizes its responsibility for ensuring that all students attending our school are protected by taking reasonable precautions to screen volunteers who may be working with students without direct supervision of staff.

Prior to volunteering with SCS, all volunteers will provide a certified and true copy of a Criminal Records Check available from your local Police or RCMP detachment, including a Vulnerable Sector Search. The Criminal Records Check must be issued in the three months preceding volunteering and updated every three years.

It is the responsibility of any volunteer, after having completed the screening process, to contact the school principal should they be subject to an investigation or conviction under the Criminal Code of Canada.

All volunteers must sign in at the School Office upon arrival at the school.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is of utmost importance in your role as a valued school volunteer. Once a volunteer begins to work in a school setting, he/she becomes privy to knowledge about children's behaviour patterns, academic ability, emotional maturity, relationships with others, etc. In some cases, information of this nature is imparted in order that the volunteer might work more effectively with the child. In other cases, it is simply acquired in the course of frequent contact in the school. This knowledge should never be shared in the community or with anyone who has no legitimate need to know. Similarly, care must be taken not to make comments harmful to the reputation of any student, staff member or other volunteer. If problems develop, the line of communication regarding a situation in the school is always first with the staff member concerned and then, if necessary, with school administration. A volunteer has every right to expect that his/her participation will be treated with the same confidentiality and respect.

## Compensation

No compensation, including honouraria or fees for services, may be paid to volunteers.

## Reimbursements

Volunteers may be reimbursed "out-of-pocket" expenses when required to attend school-based activities outside of Saskatoon. All purchases must adhere to SCS standards and procedures. Reimbursements will only be considered when supported by receipts and *approved in advance via a Purchase Request form completed by the supervising staff member*. Eligible expenses are:

- Actual cost of meals purchased outside of Saskatoon. Reimbursed to the following maximums:
  - breakfast: \$10.00
  - lunch: \$15.00
  - dinner: \$25.00
- Actual cost of accommodations. Note: Purchase Request forms for all purchases over \$100 must show proof of best value.
- Fuel costs if using a personal vehicle. Claims must be supported with receipts showing verification of a fuel fill immediately before and after the trip. Parents claiming fuel costs for transporting students/team personnel must have transported a minimum of two non-family members at all points during the trip.
- Courses or certifications required to perform the volunteer activity.

## Transporting Students

Volunteers who plan to transport students must comply with the SCS Student Transportation policy and be authorized by the school principal. The policy and Driver Authorization Form are available from the School Office.



## **Disclosure of Possible Child Abuse**

It is a legal obligation to report any suspected case of child abuse. If a child indicates to a volunteer that he/she has been or is the victim of abuse, or if a volunteer has strong suspicions that a student may be an abuse victim, the volunteer must inform either the supervising teacher or an administrator. One of the most difficult things to handle may be when the student asks the person in whom they have confided to “promise not to tell”. A volunteer cannot make such a promise and should be clear about that to the child. Don’t try to “counsel” the child. Remain merely a sympathetic “listening ear” without being judgmental or trying to offer solutions. Assistance and counselling should come from those professionals with the responsibility and experience to provide it.

## **Liability Insurance**

Volunteers, when acting in a school approved activity, are insured under the school’s insurance plan in the same way as staff with respect to actual or alleged negligence. However, it is the duty of any person who witnesses any incident which could become a claim, or receives any word that a claim may be made, to notify the staff member in charge without delay. The incident must then be relayed to the Executive Director so that the school’s insurance company will have the opportunity to investigate while it is fresh in everyone’s mind.

Any person who voluntarily transports students in his/her own vehicle shall follow procedures as provided through school administration, in accordance with the Student Transportation Policy, including completion of the necessary form. Volunteers should be made aware of these procedures prior to transporting students.

## **Non-Faculty Coaches**

A non-faculty coach is a volunteer who is approved by SCS to coach a school team and is not SCS staff.

In addition to the regular volunteer screening process, non-faculty coaches must complete Saskatchewan High School Athletics Association (SHSAA) Form E-14, Declaration for Non-Faculty Coach, which requires proof of completion of the SHSAA Fundamentals of Coaching course, Concussion Protocol course and Respect in Sport course.

Designations of “head coach” and “assistant coach” will be made at the beginning of the season. Alternate coaching arrangements during the season must be approved by the Physical Education teacher or the Principal.