Parent Helper Program

Introduction

Welcome to GRG Parent Help Program. We thank you for your involvement and commitment. We hope that you enjoy working with the children at GRG and that you find it challenging and rewarding.

To assist you with your classroom experience the following information has been compiled to ensure you know your exact roles and responsibilities, as well, provide answers to any enquiries you may have.

Please take the time to read this information as it is designed to assist you and to make your experience at GRG a memorable and rewarding one.

The Parent Help Role
The role of the parent helper is complex and varied. In fact, the role that a GRG parent helper has with respect to the students will change over a given time or will differ from one situation to another. Perhaps it would be helpful to think about the role as being a good instructor, a motivator, supporter, organizer, an extra pair of hands and planner and even a role model to some students.

Basic goals that GRG parent helpers could have:

- Be effective and helpful
- Promote self esteem of students
- Build and develop student skill levels
- Help to develop independent and self reliant learners

To achieve the goals set by classroom teachers:

- Show interest in all students
- Be confident of your knowledge
- Develop good communication skills
- Be able to understand your own limitations

Code of behaviour and expectations of students at GRG.
You should familiarize yourself with the expectations of students as set down in the Student Organiser. This will give you a sound understanding of the way in which student behaviour is managed at GRG. You will at all times work under the direction of the classroom teacher and follow the directions given by the teacher. If you have any concerns about what you have been requested to complete then you should raise these with the teacher.

⚠️ Please note: Corporal punishment is never accepted as a means of dealing with inappropriate behaviour. Georges River Grammar does not, under any
circumstances, sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents to enforce discipline at the School.

The parent helper must have the respect of the students. This is something that the students will give initially and that the parent helper must “earn” to maintain. Respect is gained by abiding with the above principles and by developing the following:

- Showing patience and support
- Completing the activities set by the teacher
- Be professional and accept responsibility for your actions

Who’s who of parent help @ GRG?

Mrs Heinecke
Head of Primary

Mrs Beverly Hudson
Director of Teaching & Learning

Who else can help you at GRG?

Mrs Janelle Varlow
K-12 Deputy Principal

Mrs Tina Carboni
Primary Office Assistant

Your child’s teacher

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Georges River Grammar:
Main office 9725 7566
Facsimile 9727 3707

Mission Statement

Georges River Grammar is a caring, learning environment that actively strives to provide opportunities for every child to achieve their potential as well as experience success and enjoyment in their spiritual, academic, social and physical endeavours. The School’s mission is an expression of its Christian ethos. Our relationship with students, staff, parents and the wider community is governed by the values of tolerance, compassion and justice.

Code of behaviour and expectations of parent helpers at GRG

- From time to time you will acquire knowledge from either the teacher or through your work with the children of the abilities, strengths and weaknesses of students in the class. At times, this information will be highly sensitive and your co-operation in ensuring the confidentiality of this information is essential. You must keep the information private and not use or divulge it to any other person.
• Support efforts to remove foul language and harassment of other students. The School does not accept the use of any form of violent behaviour.
• Avoid the use of derogatory language based on gender.
• Courtesy should be shown towards all staff members.
• Visitors should leave the classroom or other venue tidy and rubbish free.
• Activities are generally designed to be fun, to improve student skills and feel good about their efforts.
• Encourage the students to make an effort at all times. Do not do the work for them.
• Cooperate with other parent helpers who may be in the room as well. You are all there for the betterment of all children.
• Control your temper.
• Do not ridicule a student for a mistake. Encouragement will prove more valuable.
• All helpers are asked to personally maintain careful standards of behaviour, language and dress in order to assist students to develop and maintain standards acceptable to the School.
• Chewing gum is not permitted during school hours.
• You should discuss with the teacher whether it is appropriate or possible for you to bring a pre-school aged child to the helper sessions. Please understand that another child is generally a distraction in the classroom and that many activities do not afford the luxury of bringing a younger child to the session.
• You should cancel your session if you have a sick child. It is not appropriate at any time to bring a sick child into the classroom with you for parent helper sessions’
• There is no payment for this volunteer work. However, please be aware of the enormous appreciation that the School has for your contribution to the children of the School. This is a fine model of Christian service for the children of GRG to witness.

Scheduling of parent help sessions and communication
• Be punctual to sessions.
• You need to sign into the School at the Main Administration Office before starting your session and collect a parent helper badge to wear while on duty.
• Your visit to the School should be limited in duration to the session at which you are helping. You should return the Parent helper badge to the office at the conclusion of the session.
• Each classroom has a set weekly timetable and therefore your sessions will mostly be at the same time each week. However, some variations to the usual routine can be expected from time to time. As small children cope better with routine, these changes will be kept to a minimum.
• Should the time of your session be changed at short notice, you will be advised by the office staff
• If you cannot attend a scheduled session, it would be appreciated if you could contact the school office as early as possible to allow the teacher time to adjust the program for the class.
• Your parent help session is not a suitable time for extended communications with the classroom teacher or the School leadership. You are asked to make
an appointment with the appropriate person for this purpose separately from your parent helper session.

Provide a safe environment
Facilities and equipment must be safe for all involved in the lesson. Adverse weather conditions must also be taken into consideration during lessons. If the teacher asks you to work with the children in an area affected by the weather you will need to use your discretion to bring the children back to the classroom if warranted by the weather conditions.

Congratulating and commiserating with students
Helpers should be careful to limit physical contact with students. If you need to handle/touch/contact/support students to demonstrate a particular technique, it is advisable to inform the student what you intend to do and ask if they agree to that demonstration. At times you may need to tap small children on the shoulder to gain their attention. It is appropriate to congratulate students with a “high five” or similar gesture. Try to avoid hugging or embracing students, however, with the student’s permission you may put an arm around their shoulder at times of stress or emotion.

Students who become or complain of illness
You should advise the teacher of any health issues relating to a student. The teacher will organize for the child to receive first aid from the Administration staff if appropriate. The teacher will send another child to accompany the child going to the office for treatment to ensure they arrive safely. You must not give any medication to a child in your care. All medications are dispensed by the office staff according to the directions sent in by the parent or health professional.

In the event of injury or accident.
In the case of an injury or accident occurring during lessons use your professional judgment to evaluate its extent.

- Ensure that appropriate medical assistance is available if required.
- Ensure that nothing is done which could aggravate the injury.
- Never leave the child unattended until professional help arrives.
- Report any injury or accident to the teacher immediately and complete an accident report form at the earliest possible moment.
- If you see a child hurt or injured in the playground, do not move them but send a bystander to the office for assistance.

In the event of injury or accident to yourself
If you sustain an injury at school or an illness that you think is related to the school environment, you must as soon as possible after the event:

- Notify the Bursar, who will contact the insurer to obtain a claim number for you.
- See a doctor as soon as possible and obtain a WorkCover medical certificate – this is a vital part of the workers compensation procedure. Forward the WorkCover medical certificate to the school’s Return to Work Coordinator or the Business Office.
- Inform the Head of Primary.
Safe and proper equipment should be provided
Existing codes and standards for equipment should be met and all equipment should be kept in good order. It should always be adequately repaired so that it is safe to use at all times. All equipment that is used for your sessions must be returned to the appropriate storeroom before you leave.

Activities must be closely supervised
Adequate supervision is necessary to ensure the environment is as safe as possible. Each activity will have its own specific requirements in this regard. During lessons, students must be closely supervised by the helper. If a student should misbehave or at any stage be rude, the incident should be immediately reported to the teacher.

Risk Assessments
The teacher is responsible for completing a risk assessment tailored specifically for each activity and venue. You are welcome to request information about this if you need clarification of any precautions necessary for the designed activity.

Critical Incident Management
Each helper should be given a Critical Incident Management Card at the beginning of the school year and is asked to keep the card in a safe and accessible place. The card outlines the procedures to follow in the event of a Critical Incident and displays emergency contact numbers.

Mobile phones and technology
Helpers should not use mobile phones for personal use while helping. Communicating with students in your care via mobile or social networking sites could be in contravention of the Child Protection legislation and should be avoided. Using your mobile phone to contact the school during an emergency is appropriate.

CHILD PROTECTION
Any adult person entering on school premises who wishes to work with children, whether paid or unpaid, needs to be properly assessed in regard to Child Protection. (Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act.)

If you have any concern that you may be a prohibited person within the meaning of the Act, you should seek legal advice. If you feel that although you are a prohibited person you wish to seek an exemption you should also seek advice.

Helpers also need to be properly assessed in regard to their suitability and to what advantage the School can gain from their presence.

Procedure:
To gain a clearance it is most important to make sure you have written evidence for identification totalling 100 points. See the Primary office for details of the forms you need to complete.

Volunteers
Volunteers are encouraged to assist the School in a variety of duties.

**Procedure:**
- Working with Children Volunteer Clearance (*Category B*) applied for;
- the volunteer is to be assigned to a member of staff under whose supervision they will work;
- volunteers must complete registration at the Admin Office for each time period they are at the School.

**Volunteers for Students with Special Needs**
Volunteers are encouraged to assist the School in a variety of duties.

**Procedure:**
- Working with Children Full Employee (*Category A*) clearance applied for;
- the volunteer is to be assigned to a member of staff under whose supervision they will work;
- volunteers must complete registration at the Admin Office for each time period they are at the School.

**SUMMARY OF CHILD PROTECTION (PROHIBITED EMPLOYMENT) ACT**
The Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act (*'Act'*) makes it an offence for a prohibited person to:
- apply for child related employment;
- undertake child related employment; or
- remain in child related employment.

Child related employment includes employment in schools and pre-schools that primarily involves direct contact with children where that contact is not directly supervised.

The Act requires an employer to require present and future employees to disclose whether or not they are a prohibited person. It also makes it an offence for an employer to employ a prohibited person in child related employment.

It is also an offence for a person to fail to disclose to the employer that they are a prohibited person or make a false disclosure.

A prohibited person is a person who has been convicted of a serious sex offence.

The relevant provisions relating to what constitutes a serious sex offence are as follows:
*in this section:*

"serious sex offence" means (subject to subsections (4) and (5)):
- an offence involving sexual activity or acts of indecency that was committed in New South Wales and that was punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more; or
- an offence, involving sexual activity or acts of indecency, that was committed elsewhere and that would have been an offence punishable by penal servitude or imprisonment for 12 months or more if it had been committed in New South Wales; or
- an offence under sections 9ID - 9IG of the Crimes Act 1900 (other than if committed by a child prostitute) or a similar offence under a law other than a law of New South Wales; or
- an offence under section 578B or 578C (2A) of the Crimes Act 1900 or a similar offence other that a law of New South Wales; or
an offence of attempting, or of conspiracy or incitement, to commit an offence referred to in the preceding paragraphs; or
any other offence, whether under the law of New South Wales or elsewhere, prescribed by the regulations.

An offence that was a serious sex offence at the time of its commission is not a serious sex offence for the purposes of this Act if the conduct constituting the offence has ceased to be an offence in New South Wales.

An offence involving sexual activity or an act of indecency is not a serious sex offence for the purposes of this Act if the conduct constituting the offence:
Occurred in a public place; and
Would not have constituted an offence in New South Wales if the place were not a public place

Sections 91D - 91G of the Crimes Act are provisions relating to child prostitution. Sections 578B and 578C(2A) of the Crimes Act relate to child pornography.

For the purpose of the act ‘employee’ includes contractors, volunteers or people undertaking practical training. The term also includes Ministers of Religion and members of religious organisations.

The Act allows the Industrial Relations Commission or the Administrative Decisions Tribunal to make orders that the Act is not to apply to a person in respect of a specified offence. The tribunal is required to take into account various criteria in making such a declaration.

**Dealing with allegations against parent helpers.**
The Child Protection Legislation is an allegations based system. Should an allegation of reportable conduct be made against an volunteer worker, the matter will be directly reported to the Ombudsman, and the parents will be informed as per the procedure outlined in *The Association of Independent Schools NSW and The NSW/ACT Independent Education Union – Recommended Protocols for Internal Investigation and Disciplinary Proceedings.*

- A conference will be held between the Principal and the individual against whom the allegation has been made. The allegation will be discussed, and the individual will be asked if they wish to be relieved of their duties/responsibilities. Suspension on full pay may occur, depending on the nature of the accusation.
- The Principal may decide to vary the regular duties of the individual, depending on the nature of their role.
- The matter will be thoroughly investigated, maintaining confidentiality of both the accused and the accuser.
- After a full investigation, further discussions between the Principal and the accused will be held, with the matter possibly being referred to the Children’s Commission.
- If the allegation proves to be supported, the matter will be referred to DOCS, and the utilisation of the accused services will be terminated.

The School places a very high priority on its efforts:
- to protect children in its care from abuse; and
- to protect staff from mischievous and false allegations.