



January 2017

Dear Parent

One of the special features of our school is the generous involvement of parent helpers in a variety of ways. These include assistance in the classrooms, in the library, and in the tuckshop. Parents also help with sporting events and excursions, and in many other ways throughout the year. Many of you would know that non-parent volunteers (grandparents etc) already require a Blue Card to assist at the school.

I am writing to you as someone who is a regular volunteer at the school to explain some new procedures that all schools are now required by legislation to introduce. These procedures apply to all volunteers who regularly assist in the school. The exceptions are for those who only occasionally assist eg during a one day excursion during the year, or a one off assistance in the classroom.

During the next few weeks we will be developing a volunteer register (similar to the sign in book already in use at the office). We request that you simply sign this register at the beginning and end of each period you are volunteering at the school. (And I appreciate that many of you already do this). These registers will be available in the office, the tuckshop, and the library. You will also be given a Volunteer Badge to wear during the period you are assisting at the school.

Enclosed with this letter is a School Volunteer Register Sheet which I ask that you complete and return to the school at your earliest convenience. The information on this sheet will be kept confidential, and is required by this new legislation. Where it says **Volunteer Position Held** simply indicate where you assist eg in the classroom or tuckshop (or both). You fulfil the requirement of the **Mandatory Student Protection In-service** by reading the enclosed Student Protection Handbook so this section can be left blank.

Included also is a **Volunteer Code of Conduct** developed by Brisbane Catholic Education. You are also asked to read through this Code of Conduct, and to speak with me or the class teacher if anything in the Code is unclear. A **Volunteer Suitability Declaration** is also enclosed and you are required to read this, sign it, and return it to me at your earliest convenience. There is also a **Student Protection Handbook for Volunteers**. You are also asked to read this, and to sign and date the 'Sign Off' sheet, and return it to me at your earliest convenience. Again, if you have any questions or concerns please contact me to discuss them.

I realise that this is another little extra inconvenience on people who are already very busy with family and work commitments, but it is required by this legislation. The aim of the legislation is to further manage any potential risks to the welfare and safety of the children. Please be assured that we value your voluntary work here at Saint Patrick's. In fact we rely on it to provide the optimum learning environment for the children.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any concerns or questions about this matter.

Thank you for your co-operation, and understanding in this matter, and for your continuing support of Saint Patrick's School.

Yours sincerely

Sue Geaney  
**Principal**

#### **Summary of new Legislative Requirements**

- 1. Complete and return SCHOOL VOLUNTEER REGISTER SHEET**
- 2. Complete and return VOLUNTEER SUITABILITY DECLARATION**
- 3. Read the Brisbane Catholic Education VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT**
- 4. Read the Brisbane Catholic Education STUDENT PROTECTION HANDBOOK FOR VOLUNTEERS**
- 5. Complete AND RETURN the VOLUNTEER STUDENT PROTECTION INFORMATION SIGN OFF FORM**