RATIONALE

All schools greatly appreciate parents who assist positively with the implementation of the school’s programs. Parent helpers however must comply with the school’s expectations and practices.

Aims:
- To enhance the educational programs at the school.
- To build the partnerships between school and home and school, to provide opportunities for parents to develop their skills and become active participants in their children’s education.

St Agnes’ Primary School is committed to providing strong parent – school partnerships between parents and the school. These partnerships support children to make the transition from home to the wider world and help the school programs meet the needs of the children and their families. Children place greater value on learning and achievement when they see their parents and teachers working together.

Guidelines

There is a high level of community participation in the life of St Agnes’ school. All parents and members of the community are required to have a current ‘Working with Children’s Check’ by law to be involved in any capacity in the school.

Parents/family members are encouraged to assist staff at St Agnes by
- helping prepare the classroom e.g. preparing charts, sharpening pencils, cleaning tables
- photocopying
- speaking on area of expertise
- covering and repairing library books
- helping for a set period in sport lessons
- typing up final copies of student's writing
- attending at working and cleaning bees
- assisting at special days

Parent helpers will be briefed on matters such as confidentiality and school ethos before assisting in school. It is essential that information about pupils, pupil performance, behaviour or any other matter be treated as confidential.

All parent helpers will be required to sign into the school and wear an identifying visitor’s badge.

A parent helper’s and volunteer’s morning tea will be provided annually by staff and students in recognition of the contributions of all parent helpers and volunteers.

Staff are expected to welcome parents to assist in all grade levels.

Parent Helpers in the classroom for Literacy
Parents can be a classroom helper by assisting in the classroom under the direction of the classroom teacher. At St Agnes’, parents are encouraged to be a classroom helper during the Literacy ‘block’ (8.45 – 10.45). All parents will need to attend a ‘Parent Helper Course’ at the beginning of the year to support their role as parent helpers in the classroom.

‘Parent Helper Course’
The parents are instructed on correct protocols in the classroom when working with students, such as being aware of making judgements about other children and retaining confidentiality. The course outlines ways that parents can assist in the classroom by working with small groups of children and providing a role model for learning. This course is conducted early in the year by the Literacy Coordinator of the school and often requires parents to commit to one hour in the course and further reading of handout material at home.

*It is in the best interest of the children in the classroom and the learning that needs to occur there, that younger siblings are not to be present in the classroom with their parent at this time. Other arrangements will need to be made outside of the school.*

The classroom teacher and the parent helpers are to communicate regularly outside of teaching hours the suitable days and times of parent help. In the event of a change of plans, both classroom teacher and parent helper will need to notify each other in advance, wherever possible.

**School Excursions / Camps**
Throughout the year, there may be opportunities for parents to assist with a class in the event of an excursion or school camp. Parent ‘extra support’ at these times is also highly valued. Information will be sent home at the beginning of the Term and closer to the date to allow for interested parents to express their interest in supporting the classroom teacher.

**Evaluation**
This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.