

VOLUNTEER SCREENING POLICY OF TRINITY LUTHERAN SCHOOL

POLICY STATEMENT

All employees and volunteers who work with children at Trinity Lutheran School must comply with the screening procedures as listed in this volunteer screening policy. This policy includes, but is not limited to establishing a volunteer application, procedures for reporting abuse, signed statements from the applicant stating that the applicant has never been formally accused, found guilty, or entered a guilty plea in a court of law to any form of child abuse or neglect, and background checks on the applicant.

PURPOSE

It is the goal of Trinity Lutheran School to provide:

- 1) A safe environment for all children involved in any school sponsored program or activity.
- 2) Comfortable working conditions for all employees and volunteers working with children.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) That all children be treated with courtesy, respect, and Christian love while attending the programs and activities of Trinity Lutheran School.
- 2) That the activities and programs of Trinity Lutheran School are conducted in a safe and secure environment and the children are properly supervised while participating in these activities and programs.
- 3) That volunteers and employees who work with children receive appropriate training to properly supervise and conduct the activities and programs, and must respond to and report dangerous or inappropriate situations.

VOLUNTEER SCREENING REQUIREMENTS

Trinity Lutheran School welcomes and encourages involvement from parents, grandparents, community members, businesses, community organizations, and representatives of other educational institutions. In order to provide students with a safe environment and allow for a variety of opportunities for volunteering, volunteer participation is classified into two categories. Depending upon the category, certain processes must be completed prior to volunteering. All volunteers will be screened annually.

CATEGORY A

Volunteers who potentially have unsupervised contact with children.

This could include direct contact with or without supervision. Typical examples could include tutors, classroom assistants, athletic coaches, student teachers, media center helpers, and field trip drivers.

Conditions typically are classrooms or areas where staff or other adults can observe at most times. These occasionally include short solitary time with children and short duration of obstructed view.

Screening requirements:

- Be able to present some form of current government-issued photo identification (driver's license, passport, military ID, or other US government identification).
- Complete and submit for approval the School Volunteer Application
- Submit to a criminal background check via the national criminal & sex offender registry.
- Before each volunteer engagement, sign in on the school approved "Volunteer/Visitor sign-in sheet" in the main office, which includes a criminal disclosure.
- Be required to display a volunteer identification badge to be surrendered at the conclusion of the day's volunteer activity.
- Volunteer drivers for field trips must present a current driver's license and provide proof of insurance each time they will drive students to an event.

CATEGORY B

Volunteers who have no unsupervised exposure or contact with children.

This person will be supervised at all times with children.

Screening requirements:

- Be able to present some form of current government-issued photo identification (driver's license, passport, military ID, or other US government identification).
- Sign in on the school approved "Volunteer/Visitor sign-in sheet" in the main office, which includes a criminal disclosure.
- Be required to display a visitor identification badge to be surrendered at the conclusion of the day's activity.

TRAINING

Volunteer training is the responsibility of the immediate supervisor within the functional area (i.e. athletic director and coach, office help and secretary, classroom aide and teacher). It is expected that the duties and responsibilities of the volunteer activity be clearly communicated to the volunteer by the supervisor. Specific training rules for coaches who have close interaction with students are written in the athletic handbook. The Board of Christian School will perform an annual audit to ensure compliance of the policy by all impacting organizations.

Confidentiality

All records will be kept confidential and secure. The school administrator will review and approve each volunteer. The school reserves the right to decline any volunteer for any reason.

RULES FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN

General rules which apply to all volunteers working with children, and included in any volunteer training manuals, include,

- 1) All volunteers must submit to the rules, recommendations, and requests of the immediate supervisor. The supervisor is ultimately responsible for all occurrences and must be allowed to use his/her experience to preclude any detrimental situations.
- 2) Lights are to remain on and door windows are not to be covered. Should lights need to be turned off for video viewing, the immediate supervisor will be present.
- 3) All volunteers should use good judgment when needing to speak to a student alone. Doors and window blinds should be open at all times. It is always preferable to have a second adult in the room when a one on one conversation is needed with a student.
- 4) Topics, vocabulary and attire should not be used/worn which may portray a negative message to students or parents.
- 5) Adult volunteers should not use alcohol during a scheduled activity or prior to it.
- 6) All volunteers should use good judgment when having physical contact with students. Do not pat them on the bottom or touch them in any way that would seem intimate, threatening, or frightening. Students should not sit on your lap. Under no circumstances should you treat a child roughly. Do not intimidate him, threaten him, grab him/her by his/her arm firmly, shake him/her, forcibly sit him/her in a chair or strike him/her. Not only would such occurrences be inappropriate to TLS atmosphere but cause of legal action could be argued.
- 7) Volunteers will always maintain a professional posture in dealing with students, avoiding emotional attachment and aware of the powerful attraction of adults in positions of authority and trust. If the development of personal or physical attraction is developing, the supervisor will be notified immediately.
- 8) If a volunteer believes that a student is in an unsafe or abusive home, he/she shall report it to the immediate supervisor.

