

# Volunteers and Privacy in the School Community

As a volunteer you may occasionally access personal information of students, staff, and others in the school community. There are legislative requirements that prescribe how an individual's personal information can be collected, used and disclosed, stored and accessed. Personal information includes health information.

Personal Information is any information that identifies an individual; it may be enrolment information, health or student progress information. Schools have a responsibility to ensure the personal information they possess is used for the purposes it was collected and is adequately secured.

For example, schools may collect and display student health information in a secured staff room to ensure students receive appropriate care. The information should not be used or disclosed for other purposes. Similarly, schools may take some limited student information off premises when on excursions. Schools are obliged to ensure personal information is secured and used for appropriate purposes.

## What do I need to do as a volunteer?

- Ensure that you have only that personal information required to undertake your role as a volunteer.
  - Ask yourself, do I need all the available information, or just a part of the available information to undertake my role?
- Ask yourself, is this information relevant to my role or the task I'm going to do?
- Don't disclose any personal information that you may have accessed in your role as a volunteer.
  - Only use personal information for the purpose it was disclosed to you in your role as a volunteer.
- Ensure that personal data is appropriately secured, particularly if it is taken off the school premises, e.g. medical information taken on an excursion.
  - If emailing personal information off site place the personal information in a word document and password protect the document. Don't include the password in the email.
  - If taking personal information on a lap top or a memory stick out of school, ensure all documents containing personal information are password protected.
- If in doubt about the handling of personal information, seek advice from staff.
  - Individuals can complain to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development or the Victorian Privacy Commissioner if they feel their privacy has been breached.
  - If you have a question or concern about handling of the personal information in the school, speak to the school or call the Privacy Officer at Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on (03) 9637 2000.

Responsible management of personal information is everyone's business.