



## **Shining Stars Volunteer Policy**

At Shining Stars, we appreciate our volunteers and the range of knowledge and skills that they bring. In our setting, a volunteer is anyone who undertakes, without pay, a role that supports in a classroom or other activities organised by Shining Stars. This policy applies to all volunteers who will have direct contact with our children in our settings activities. For the purposes of this policy, volunteers are divided into two types: regular volunteers are those who will assist on a regular, on-going basis; one-time volunteers are those who will assist with a specific, one-time activity, usually a class trip.

### **Safeguarding Children**

Shining Stars is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in our care and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. In furtherance of this and in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Education and with current best practices, Shining Stars will require a RCIPS Clearance Certificate for every regular volunteer before he/she begins volunteer work and will clearly set out the requirements and responsibilities of all volunteers. All volunteers are advised to alert the Shining Stars Child Protection Officers (Bernadette Avillanosa Primary Child Protection Officer or if not available either of the two Secondary Child Protection Officers Carina Joaquin or Christina Balaguer) if they have concerns regarding a child's wellbeing.

### **Volunteer Application and Agreement Form for Regular Volunteers**

All regular volunteers (except as noted on page 2) must complete the Shining Stars Volunteer Application and Agreement Form and provide a current Police Clearance Certificate. (A RCIPS Clearance certificate which is 6 months or less is deemed to be current). On acceptance of these documents by the Shining Stars the volunteer will be notified. A Police Clearance Certificate will be required every two years. Approval must be signed off by the School Manager. All regular volunteers are also expected to have completed Child Protection and Safeguarding training as required by the Ministry of Education.

### **Volunteer Identification and Supervision**

All volunteers shall wear Shining Stars issued identification while volunteering. For the protection of volunteers and the children, volunteers will be under direct supervision of Shining Stars staff and may not be on their own with an individual child or group of children at any time. Volunteers shall take all appropriate steps to avoid being alone with an individual child, or group of children, in any place where observation by a Shining Stars staff member is not possible. Shining Stars Staff retain primary responsibility for all children at all times, including behaviour and activities. Volunteers should expect and follow guidance from the staff about any activity they are carrying out. In the event of any query or problem, a volunteer should seek advice and clarification from the class teacher. All volunteers/visitors must sign in and out of Shining Stars as well as wear a "Volunteer" badge at all times.

### **Health and Safety**

Shining Stars places high importance on the health and safety of our children. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. accompanying children on visits). Volunteers should exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher or a member of Shining Stars management.



### **Confidentiality**

Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive and (made inappropriately) can cause distress. All volunteers shall treat confidential information obtained about Shining Stars and its children in the course of their volunteer efforts as such and not disclose or discuss such information.

### **Code of Conduct**

To assist Shining Stars in providing a safe environment and a positive education climate, volunteers are asked to comply with the Code of Conduct for Volunteers (See Appendix 1). This code includes but is not limited to:

- Cell phone usage is only permitted when not working with the children
- Taking photographs or videos of children is not permitted.
- Maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the nursery school.
- Treat children with respect and dignity.
- Report any problems as they arise to your supervisor in the workplace.
- Seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements.

Volunteers are also required to read and sign the Shining Stars Child Protection Policy.

### **One-Time Volunteers**

Volunteers assisting with a "one-time" activity, for example a class trip, are not required to complete the Volunteer Application and Agreement Form nor provide a Police Clearance Certificate. One-time volunteers shall wear Shining Stars issued identification while volunteering, will be under direct supervision of Shining Stars staff and may not be on their own with an individual child, or group of children, at any time. One-time volunteers who are supervising class trips are to be given a copy of the Volunteer Guidance Notes for Shining Stars trips in advance of the trip.

Should a 'one-time volunteer' wish to engage with more volunteering activities with Shining Stars, adherence to the aforementioned requirements must be complied with prior to the continuation of volunteer activities.



**Appendix 1**  
**Shining Stars Volunteer Code of Conduct**

The following excerpts from the Cayman Islands Staff Safeguarding Policy for Schools v1 12-Aug-2016 outlines appropriate and expected physical behavior, verbal and digital communication, and general conduct for staff and volunteers, and serves as our reference.

**Physical Behavior**

A volunteer's interaction with children should be done in open, public spaces. Volunteers are not permitted to be alone with a child, or group of children, without a staff member from Shining Stars present.

Volunteers must not transport children.

**Appropriate/Inappropriate Behavior**

Appropriate physical behavior includes contact that maintains physical boundaries at all times and only consists of public and nonsexual touches such as: pats on the upper back and shoulders, holding hands to cross the street safely, child-initiated hugs, high fives and support with toileting or changing clothes.

Inappropriate physical behavior includes contact that abuses, exploits, or harasses the child such as: slapping, shaking, pinching, hitting, punching, pushing, grabbing, kicking, patting the buttocks, touching/exposing private body parts, intimate/romantic/sexual contact, showing pornography or involving children in pornographic activities.

**Communication**

Volunteers shall use caution and discretion in all verbal, nonverbal, and digital communication with children. Communication between volunteers and children shall be transparent and about centre activities, with the exception of other appropriate topics, such as the child's well-being, hobbies, interests, weekend, summer activities etc.

**Appropriate/Inappropriate Verbal Communication**

Appropriate verbal communication includes praise and/or positive reinforcement with a pedagogical purpose when used consistently and equally for all children.

Inappropriate verbal communication includes yelling, threatening, ridiculing, use of expletives, degrading comments, profanity, sexual insinuation or risqué jokes.



### **Appropriate/Inappropriate Digital Communication**

Volunteers should not communicate with children or parents via emails, phone calls, and/or text messages while carrying out their function of a Shining Stars volunteer.

Volunteers shall not allow children to access to electronic devices that may expose them to inappropriate conduct, and private messaging via social media and/or online gaming communities.

### **General Conduct**

#### **Volunteers shall:**

- a. Treat all children with dignity and respect and provide safe and supportive interactions that foster their social, emotional and academic development.
- b. Comply with all mandatory reporting procedures.
- c. Cooperate fully with any investigation of misconduct or child abuse, and respond promptly to requests from investigating agencies (i.e. Royal Cayman Islands Police Service officers and Department of Children and Family Services Social Workers).

#### **Volunteers shall NOT:**

- a. Engage in bullying as defined in the anti-bullying policy.
- b. Use or be under the influence of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in the presence of children.
- c. Give individual children gifts without the knowledge of the child's parents/caregivers.

#### **Other considerations:**

- a. Volunteers shall seek assistance from Shining Stars staff to address any inappropriate behaviour displayed by children.
- b. Volunteers shall not assist children with toileting or changing; but advise staff should this be required.
- c. Cell phone usage is only permitted when not working with the children
- d. Taking photographs or videos of children is not permitted.
- e. Volunteers must maintain standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the Centre.
- f. Report any problems as they arise to your supervisor in the workplace.
- g. Seek guidance through clarification where you may be uncertain of tasks or requirements.



## Volunteer Application and Agreement

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at Shining Stars. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated, and we look forward to working together in a mutually beneficial experience. Please complete this application prior to beginning your volunteer position and submit it to Shining Stars Manager (Bernadette Avillanosa).

### **This section must be completed in full.**

Full Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email Contact \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

The days I am able to volunteer are: (please circle)

Monday AM / PM   Tuesday AM / PM   Wednesday AM / PM   Thursday AM / PM   Friday AM / PM

### **By signing below, I acknowledge and agree that:**

- I understand that I am required to provide a current Police Clearance Certificate (dated within 6 months) and a letter of good character.
- I understand that I am required to have completed child protection training, in line with the Ministry of Education's requirements.
- I have read and agree to follow at all times the Shining Stars Child Protection Policy and Volunteers Policy which includes the Shining Stars Volunteers Code of Conduct.
- I agree to support Shining Stars' vision, values and ethos.
- I will follow the instructions of Shining Stars staff and will attend any meeting deemed necessary by Shining Stars.
- I agree to keep strictly confidential any information about the children and about Shining Stars that I learn whilst being a volunteer.
- I have declared to the Manager ANY convictions, cautions and pending cases I may have, regardless of how long ago they occurred, including those regarded as 'spent'. I am not and have never been disqualified from working with children.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Approval By \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_