Contents

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 3

Class Carer Roles and Responsibilities ................................................................. 3

Co-ordination and Organisation ............................................................................. 4

Caring for the Class Community ............................................................................ 4, 5

Documentation ........................................................................................................ 5

Spring Fair and Open Day ....................................................................................... 5

Fundraising ................................................................................................................ 6

Tips and Planning Suggestions ................................................................................ 6

Class Carers strengthen the foundation of the school community as a whole, by nurturing the relationships within the Class and the wider school community.
Introduction

Class Carers play a very important role for the class and within our school community. They assist, organise, liaise, support, communicate and inform the members of our respective Class communities, as well as the broader school community. These voluntary positions offer parents a wonderful opportunity to feel closer to the Class Teacher/Guardians and the school community as a whole. It is hoped that all parents will participate as a Class Carer for at least one year during their children’s journey through the school.

It is intended that this documentation, which has been borne out of many meetings and discussions and comes from wealth of experience of many who have come before us, will provide some clarity to the role. Your assistance in keeping this information current and updated is sought, so that what we learn can be passed on to those who follow behind us.

Class Carer Roles and Responsibilities

- Class List– Ensure all parents have copies of the Class List with emails addresses and contact details of the consenting parents

- Class communications- prepare and distribute regular emails in conjunction/consultation with your Class Teacher/Guardian- include items such as important dates/scheduled events news, reminders and rosters

- Class meetings- Ask the Class teacher/Guardian to set aside some time at each class meeting for Class carers to remind parents about fort coming events, rosters etc. If parents have any suggestions regarding topics they would like to see discussed at the class meeting, pass these suggestions to the class teacher/guardian. Ensure that either a class carer o another parent takes minutes at the meeting and then make sure they are distributed to all parents.

- Liaison- Class carers act to strengthen the relationships both within the Class and with the wider school community. As such, parents will often speak to Class Carers when they have questions, issues or concerns. In many cases, you will be able to easily respond to their questions. If you do not know the answer to a parent’s question, it may be a simple matter to find out this information and get back to them. If a parent has serious issue or concern, you should direct them to the appropriate person or persons at the School ( Such as Class Teacher/Head of Primary/Principal). It is essential that any discussions of this nature are kept confidential

- Class carers may also wish to notify the Business Manager of their role and request the Contributed Services Levy be credited to their account
Co-ordination and Organisation

Ask your Class Teacher/Guardian which activities/tasks they would like to have parental assistance for and organise rosters for these activities/tasks. Some of the common activities/tasks are as follows:

- Walks/excursions/camps - accompanying the children on walks, excursions and sometimes camps (this will depend on the Class).
- Classroom activities - assisting with activities in the classroom such as craft, cooking and reading.
- Participation in working bees

You will also need to co-ordinate the parents efforts in relation to scheduled events/responsibilities allocated to your Class (e.g. Spring Fair)

Caring for the Class Community

- New Families – It is important that new families are welcomed and provided with a support/contact family. You could ask your Class Teacher/Guardian to suggest a family that may be compatible or ask a family that lives in the same locality as the new family to be the support/contact family (they may be able to assist with travel routes or car-pooling). Provide the new family with a Class List and any other documentation that may help them settle in to the school. You may also like to welcome the new parents with a morning tea or drinks evening which can be, but does not need to be, a large gathering.

- Departing Families – It is also important to farewell families that are leaving the school. The Class Teacher/Guardian will arrange for the children to farewell the departing child in Class and you may wish to also have a small function to farewell the parents.

- Social Functions – Organise some social functions for your Class during the school year, or ask for a volunteer from your parents to organise a social function. Alternate family events (such as picnics/plays in the park) with parent only functions (such as a Class Dinner). When organising your Class events, ensure that the proposed dates do not clash with the events on the School Calendar (located in the School Office) and also consider parent commitments to their other children’s classes.

- Supporting Families – There will be times when families are in need of extra support (such as the arrival of a new baby or an illness or bereavement in the family). You may need to discuss with the family in question what help would be most appreciated and appropriate, however, organising a roster for meals or helpers or arranging for children to be dropped off/picked up from school can often be a good place to start.

- Supporting Class Teachers/Guardians – Class Teachers/Guardians make an incredible commitment to the families in their Class and we should be conscious that they also have an equally important commitment to their own families. We are on a long journey together
and there may be times during this journey that your Class Teacher/Guardian is in need of some extra consideration and care. Work together to recognise these times and support your Class Teacher/Guardian and their family in the same way that you would support another family in need.

- Class Teacher/Guardian Birthday – Have someone provide a cake for the Class to share and liaise with the Class Teacher/Guardian to help make this a special day of celebration for them and the children.

**Documentation**

**(Please document everything!! Your experiences are invaluable.**)

The Class Carers Handbook is still a work in progress and it’s important that it remain current and relevant. Class Carers are requested to document their experiences when organising and coordinating events so that additional information and suggested improvements can be incorporated into future versions of the Class Carer Handbook.

- Where information has been provided, please note any changes or additional information at the time of an event.
- If there is no information provided, please write up information about the event as soon as possible afterwards (while it is still fresh in your mind).
  - Details to include:
    - Background – what the event is for, when and where it is held.
    - Requirements – number of people required, what and how much was used, where to get things from.
    - Additional information – stories, songs, recipes, craft ideas.
    - Suggestions – what worked well, what needed to be done differently and how to avoid problems for next time.

All information and suggested amendments/improvements should be passed to the office.

**Spring Fair and Open Day**

Classes will be allocated responsibilities for the spring fair and Open Day by the Spring Fair committee. The Spring Fair Committee is made up of parent volunteers from within the school community and may also include one or two staff members in the capacity of school representatives/liaisons. The Spring Fair and Open Day is the largest single fundraising event on the school calendar and Class Carers are urged to encourage maximum participation from their class communities.
Fundraising

All funds raised through the school, whether through class, whole or part school events are managed by the school administration and allocated to projects through discussion with the business manager, the college of teachers and the class carers. Classes wishing to undertake class-targeted fundraising should raise the issue for discussion with the class teacher and principal.

Tips and Planning Suggestions

• It is recommended that Class Carers have a planning meeting with their Class Teacher/Guardian prior to the commencement of the school year. Decide which of the Class Carers will act as the nominated representative and coordinate the efforts of the Class Carers and decide which areas will be the focus for each Class Carer during the year. Ensure you ask your Class Teacher/Guardian about their availability during school hours and after hours to give parents clear guidelines on the best times to contact the Class Teacher/Guardian (and when not to contact the Class Teacher/Guardian).

• As soon as possible after this meeting, send a Class Notice/Newsletter outlining the commitments and responsibilities for the year as well as any introducing any new families and detailing events (such as Class Meetings and Festivals) and roster responsibilities for Term 1.

• Ensure parents return their Privacy Consent Forms to the School Office and then provide parents with a Class List (from the School Office) and provide updated Class Lists throughout the year as needed. Also ensure parents notify the School Office of any changes to their contact details.

• For the entry point of Prep you might consider starting the year with a welcome morning tea or similar function. Ensure you meet and get to know all the families in your Class, as they may be able to/wish to contribute their skills and ideas to the Class or wider school community. For those returning classes, sometimes a picnic or play in the park prior to the commencement of the school year can work well.

• Once the Class’ Weekly Programme has been finalised (generally a couple of weeks into Term 1) provide copies to parents (if your Class Teacher/Guardian is happy for you to do so). This helps parents to have a picture of what their child is doing each day during the school week and also helps parents to ensure their child is properly prepared for each days activities (such as wearing the appropriate clothing for activities such as walks/sport/gardening).

• In liaison with the Class Teacher, aim to distribute a Class Notice/Newsletter prior to the commencement of each term including important dates/events, news, reminders and rosters. This allows parents to put important dates and rostered duties into their diaries/calendars in advance and be prepared for the coming term.
• Aim to organise a classroom working bee prior to the commencement of each term in order to ensure that the Class Teacher/Guardian and the children return to a clean, tidy and welcoming classroom environment.

• For your Class' allocated events/responsibilities ensure you co-ordinate with the Class Carers of the other Classes involved (if applicable). Aim to have rosters for these scheduled events (such as Bush Dance, Open Day and the Spring Fair) completed at least 1-2 weeks prior to the event. Let parents know that each family is expected to contribute in some way, rather than only relying on those parents who you know will contribute. Also note that some events, which occur at the beginning of the school year, will require organisation at the end of the preceding year (such as the New Parents’ Morning Tea).

• Use the Telephone Tree only to pass on urgent messages – and perform periodical checks to ensure that the Telephone Tree is working smoothly and that contact numbers have not changed. Emails and written notes sent home with the children are best for non-urgent messages. You may at times also need to follow up on any requests you have made by personally phoning the parents involved.

• When classes are returning from camps the school occasionally needs to advise parents of changes to the scheduled time of arrival back at school. Rather than having one or two parents try to call each parent to pass on the message, have all parents call in to a nominated person or persons, (at a nominated time) to confirm the arrival time.

• Don’t feel that the Class Carers have to do it all, your role is to co-ordinate the efforts of the families in your Class. Ensure you request assistance if needed and don’t be afraid to delegate. Be mindful of your families’ individual strengths and weaknesses and remember that if you give families plenty of notice, there is a better possibility that they will be able to provide the assistance requested.

• The School Newsletter is also an effective means of reinforcing communication with parents. School Newsletter entries must be into the School Office by Tuesday mornings for publication on Thursday. Email to: newsletter@sophiamundi.vic.edu.au