



GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS WORKING IN SCHOOL

WELCOME TO OUR SCHOOL

School Vision:

To encourage and support thoughtful, happy and responsible children with a lifelong passion for learning, within a Christian community.

Reviewed and Updated: 11.09.14, 14.09.16

Thank you for your interest in volunteering in school. Volunteering can take many forms and we appreciate the help that our volunteers give us to support the work of the school. We have produced this guide to help you feel comfortable working in school and we hope that you will also feel able to ask any questions as they arise.

The points of contact for volunteers in school are as follows:

- the class teacher you work with
- Office Staff –(Mrs Barlow, or Mrs Coates)
- the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher

It is important for school security and fire regulations that all staff, visitors and volunteers to the school can be identified and located at all times and we ask you to follow the simple routine of:

- Signing in and out when coming into and leaving the premises
- Wearing the Visitor badge we give you at all times whilst in school

WHERE CAN I WORK?

We generally find it best if volunteers do not work in classes where they have children or relatives as it can be unsettling for the children and it avoids confusion about your role in school.

Please let us know if you have a strong preference about the age group with which you would like to work or if there is a particular task on which you would like to focus. You might even have a preference for which year group you would like to work with. We always appreciate feedback about your volunteering experiences. We want you to be happy and we want you to know that we value your time and energy.

HOW MUCH TIME MUST I GIVE?

It's up to you! We appreciate all the time you choose to offer. Some volunteers prefer to have a timetable. Some prefer to arrange single visits when they can spare some time. All we ask is that you let us know if you have made an arrangement with the school but find that you can't come. Your work in school is valuable and the teacher may have been counting on you to help with an activity that cannot go ahead without your help. To let us know if you cannot come, just give us a call or send a message with your child so that we can avoid disappointing the children. School is a work place and you will be supporting children's learning and joining a committed team of staff and volunteers.

WHERE CAN I GO IN THE SCHOOL?

As a volunteer you will be asked to work with the teacher/s who have requested your help. For most of the time therefore, you will be sharing the classroom with the teacher/s concerned. The teacher will be responsible for you and if you are in any doubt about your role, where you should be working or questions about the school please ask your teacher. Apart from moving about the school in the normal course of the day, we would expect you to stay with the teacher who will supervise your activities. If you are with us during break times, you can join your teacher in the staff room. You can leave your personal belongings in the teacher's cupboard in the classroom. You can use the toilets that the staff use. Please do not use the children's toilets.

Mobile phones should be on silent whilst you are in school and kept in the classroom cupboard and should never be used in the presence of children.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WHILST WORKING IN SCHOOL?

We expect all members of the school community to be polite, courteous and self-disciplined. Pupils watch us and follow our example. The same rules apply to staff, children and volunteers working in school. Please discuss problems with the teacher or Headteacher. The teachers in school are expected to act "in loco parentis" — this means in place of the parents. They are responsible for the children whilst they are at school. The following are some important rules:

- Never get into an argument with children or adults. Teachers are trained to deal with problem situations and they are paid to take responsibility.
- Never tell off a child. The school has a code of discipline which children are expected to follow. As a volunteer you are not expected to discipline children.
- If there is a problem — tell the teacher straight away.
- The only time we would expect any adult to intervene is to prevent a child hurting themselves or another child.
- Do this by telling them quietly and firmly to stop. Always seek help from another adult.
- Never shout at a child.
- Never hit a child.
- Never threaten to hit or manhandle a child.
- Never be left in sole charge of a child.
- Read the school policy on bullying.

WHAT WORK SHOULD I NOT UNDERTAKE?

- Some activities would bring volunteers into conflict with employed persons and may strain industrial relations. The teacher will know what these are and you should ask if you are not sure.
- Health and Safety Regulations will prevent you undertaking some activities.
- Some activities will expose you to unnecessary risks and teachers supervising your work should ensure that this does not happen. For example, never be left alone with a child or children. You should be clear about your responsibilities and your role at the school. If in doubt check with the Headteacher.

DO I NEED TO FILL IN ANY FORMS?

For legal reasons all adults who help in the school must undergo a police check which means completing an enhanced DBS. We can help you fill in the form or on-line application and explain it to you. The DBS check is for the safety of the children which you will agree is of prime importance.

If you are volunteering with children under the age of five then you will also be asked to complete the Disqualification by Association form.

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING?

Safeguarding & promoting the welfare of children is defined as: protecting children from maltreatment preventing impairment of children's health or development ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe & effective care taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Child protection is a part of safeguarding & promoting welfare. It refers to the activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suffering, or are likely to suffer, significant harm.

- Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with and come into contact with should be voiced with the Classteacher immediately who will advise the next course of action
- Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter immediately with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

We expect our volunteers to abide by the same code of confidentiality as teachers. Please ask your teacher about this. It is very important that everything you hear or see in school remains in school and should not be repeated or discussed outside of school. The following are some important rules:

- Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with and come into contact with should be voiced with the Classteacher and NOT with the parents of the child or persons outside school.
- Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school.
- Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher and not discussed with anyone else.

USE OF SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

- Never use social network sites to make derogatory comments which could bring staff into disrepute, including making comments about pupils, parents, other staff members, the senior leadership team, Governors, local authority or the wider community.

WHAT IF I AM NOT HAPPY?

We will ensure that you have an opportunity each half term to discuss how you feel about your volunteering with the teacher responsible for you but if you are unhappy in the meantime please tell us!

Please do not just leave. If it is work or other problems one of us will be pleased to listen and help if we can. It's the least we can do in return for your valuable time and commitment!

AND FINALLY...

We would like to thank you for offering to volunteer to help at our school. We regard you as a friend and member of our team. We have a professional duty to you - just as we have to all members of staff— to make your time with us happy and fulfilling.

Together we make a great team