



School Volunteer Policy

Approved by:	Cristy Nelson	Date: September 2023
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Aim	3
Introduction	3
Ethos	3
Safeguarding	4
Becoming a Volunteer in School	4
Deployment of Volunteers	4
Volunteer Roles in School	4
Procedures and Protocols Health and Safety/Safeguarding	5
Confidentiality	5
Guidelines for Supporting Children in School	6
General Housekeeping	6

Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

- To provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion.
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures.

Introduction

Volunteers are parents or other adults working alongside school staff and students on work experience. At Sherwell Valley Primary School we welcome those wishing to help in the school and value the contribution they make to school life. We believe that the involvement of parents, carers and volunteers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Volunteers often come to school to help with tasks such as ICT, art, cooking, and especially reading, and usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes.

In addition volunteers often help when we take the children on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of the Friends of Sherwell Valley (our Parent/Teacher Association). These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, teachers and children - the experience is positive, rewarding and there is a shared understanding of the role and expectation of a volunteer in our school.

Ethos

Sherwell Valley Primary is a good school with wonderful pupils and a great staff and governor team. Our vision is to develop a learning community in which everyone is supported in becoming a caring, collaborative, critical and creative thinker. As an inclusive school we celebrate diversity and value the achievements of all children. We are committed to providing the greatest possible access for all children by providing a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which is appropriate for meeting their needs. We particularly want to ensure that parents and pupils are fully participative in the process.

This mission statement and vision, agreed by all, is key to the way we work and we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement with it, and to work hard to achieve it.

Safeguarding

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, volunteers who are not already known to the school will be asked to attend an informal induction interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. The school has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

We carry out an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. In order for you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS check, which we will help you with if needed. You will also be asked to do some other training and read some documents to give you a basic understanding of the school and particularly its safety and safeguarding procedures. All schools need to hold a register of the checks undertaken.

Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are completed only in the best interests and safety of the children. Those who help out at specific

events e.g. school fair, relatives in school days, school trips etc who do not have unsupervised access to children do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children. All volunteers **must** read and sign our Parent/Helper Agreement (Appendix 2) to ensure they are aware of the schools policy regarding volunteers as well as their own responsibilities while in school (or on a trip).

Becoming a Volunteer in School

All volunteers will be asked to attend an induction meeting which will cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding & Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Fire Procedures

Deployment of Volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need for support. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not always be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting and can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion.

It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he/she will not always be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g. supporting a more practical lesson).

Volunteer Roles in School

Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that parents do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Sharing books;
- Working on the computer;
- Playing games;
- Making things;
- Cooking;
- Gardening;
- Sewing;
- Topic related studies;
- Coming with us on visits (see appendix 2);

The teacher will give you:

- Clear guidelines about the activity;
- All the materials you need.

Procedures and Protocols Health and Safety/Safeguarding

When a volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office. Please indicate your arrival time and which class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for. **A visitor badge must be worn at all times in school.**

The Headteacher has the authority to withdraw the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

Confidentiality

It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality. While in school you are likely to become aware of issues relating to individual children. You may see children struggling with work, be upset or misbehaving or hear/see other information concerning a child while you are with us in school. **It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent.**

The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in classrooms do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school. If you ever have any concerns about a child, please speak to the Class Teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting.

Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the Prevent Duty about a child must be shared immediately with The Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputies. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is: **Mrs Cristy Nelson** (Headteacher), and she is supported by the Deputy DSL's who are **Mrs Deborah Gaywood**, **Mr Matt Briant**, **Mr Andrew Robinson**, **Mrs Hannah Sennett** and **Claire Jones** who is the Safeguarding Administrator.

Guidelines for Supporting Children in School

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary.
- There is no rush. We give the children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although some children may need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Please don't be tempted to do the work for them!
- The learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is often much more important than the end product
- When playing games with the children, encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good participant.
- It is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.
- Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

General Housekeeping

Mobile phones: We would be most grateful if you could keep your mobile phone switched off/on silent and secure whilst helping in school. **Mobile phones must never be used when working with the children in school (or on a trip).** You can only use your mobile phone in the school staffroom, but we politely ask you not take photos whilst on site.

Tea / Coffee arrangements: If you are in school over the break period, there are tea and coffee making facilities for visitors in the staffroom which you are welcome to use.

First Aid: Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or teacher on duty if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.

Fire: Please ensure you are aware of the school's fire evacuation policy and the escape route for where you are in the school (there is a lilac Fire Evacuation Plan on the wall in each room showing the evacuation route from that room to the assembly point. If the fire alarm sounds, please make your way safely to the nearest exit, guiding the child you are working with if away from the main class area (e.g. hearing readers in the library).

Attendance: If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it is helpful to know in advance, even if that's only a phone message on the morning in question.

References: Occasionally, volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months attendance of regular volunteering (e.g. once a week) before we feel able to provide a work-based reference. We believe that

Appendix 1 - Volunteer form

Name:	
Address:	
Telephone No:	
Email Address	

If you are a parent of a child/ren in the school please give names and classes:

Have you read the School Volunteer Policy?

Yes:		No:	
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Which area/s of the school would you prefer to support?

Do you have any specific skills/strengths that could be utilised?

Yes:		No:	
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Are there any activities that you cannot support? Please give details;

Yes:		No:	
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When are you available to support in school? Please give days and times;

Yes:		No:	
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Appendix 2 – Guidance for Volunteers for School Trips

Volunteer/Parent Helper – Agreement.

Thank you for offering to help with the children – we are delighted that we are able to use your time, skills and patience to the benefit of the children at our school. We hope you have an enjoyable time while you are with us.

The school has a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its children. This includes a duty to take all reasonable steps to ensure that adults who come into the buildings or grounds are not a risk to the children or young people.

It is important to have an agreement that includes measures to ensure suitability of all volunteers and visitors.

1. Confidentiality

Adults are expected to treat information they receive about children and young people in a discreet and confidential manner.

2. Propriety and Behaviour

Adults are expected that they will adopt high standards of personal conduct in order to maintain confidence and respect of the public in general and all those with whom they work.

3. Physical Contact

It is crucial that in all circumstances, adults should only touch children in ways which are appropriate to their agreed role and responsibilities. To be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child.

4. Behaviour Management

Adults must not use force as a form of punishment. Adults must adhere to the school's behaviour management policy.

5. Supervision of Children

Be clear of the children you are responsible for during the trip and have a list of these children, including having information regarding EHC plans, social/emotional/behavioural difficulties and allergies.

6. Transporting Children

Help ensure that all children and adults are wearing seatbelts and are sat down whilst any vehicle is in motion.

7. Emergency procedures

Be clear with all emergency procedures during the trip. The lead teacher will speak to you about these before the trip commences.

8. Mobile Phones and Photography

In the case of an emergency, mobile phones may be carried by all adults. If in the absence of a mobile phone, please let a teaching member of staff know. All mobile phones must remain switched off for the duration of the trip. Parents must not take photographs.

9. Consumption of Substances

Consumption of certain substances is not permitted on school trips. These include: alcohol, smoking and vaping. If you are unsure if any other substances can be consumed, please check first.

10. First Aid

Report all accident and injury incidents to the designated first aider.

11. Toileting

If a child needs the toilet, ensure you are accompanied by another adult, preferably a teaching member of staff. In all toileting and changing facilities, mobile phones must be switched off.

12. Whistle Blowing

The school has a whistle-blowing policy in place and clear procedures for dealing with allegations against staff/parents/helpers which are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board’s procedures.

13. Sharing Concerns and Recording Incidents

Adults should be familiar with the school’s system for recording concerns and should take responsibility for recording and incident, passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of any individual in the school.

Safeguarding and the health and safety of all during the trip is paramount.

If you have any questions about the above or relating to something additional, please speak to the trip leader or a teaching member of staff.

I therefore agree to the conditions above and understand that if I fail to follow these guidelines, I will not be considered for future trips.

Signed

Print Name

Date