

# **Ely St John's Primary School**

## **Volunteer Policy**

### **Vision**

We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community. Additional support, 1:1 or in groups or generally in the classroom is invaluable to the teacher in achieving all that is possible for the children.

### **Aims of the Volunteer Policy**

- 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 necessary safeguarding and confidentiality procedures are understood and upheld.

### **Our volunteers include:**

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Adults volunteering to gain experience to become a Teaching Assistant
- Students on placements
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents

### **Volunteers may support the school in a number of ways:**

- Supporting pupils and groups of pupils within classrooms
- Supporting children's reading
- Supervising children on school visits
- Sharing their own skills or talents or knowledge with a class
- Helping with curriculum activities such as design and technology, art, cooking, gardening or during special
- theme days.

### **Safeguarding**

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are asked to read the Volunteer Guidelines (Appendix 1) and sign the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 2) before volunteering in school.

- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all volunteers must be DBS checked where the activity is regulated or be working under the supervision of a staff member.
- The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes it is not in the best interests of the children.
- The headteacher will talk volunteers through the Code of Conduct for All Adults Policy and make them aware of the following duty:

*Through their day-to-day contact with pupils and direct work with families all staff in school have a responsibility to:*

- *Identify concerns early to prevent them from escalating*
- *Provide a safe environment in which children can learn*
- *Identify children who may benefit from early help*
- *Know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused or neglected*
- *Follow the referral process if they have a concern*

*(See Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2016, p6)*

### **Confidentiality**

- It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality.
- Any concerns volunteers have about the children with whom they work and come into contact with should be shared with the class teacher 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.

### **Safeguarding**

- Mobile phones cannot be turned on, used or on view while in direct contact with the children. They cannot be used for photographing children – only school cameras can be used.  
*(Our policy on use of mobile phones, cameras and sharing of images is set out in our Safer Care Code of Conduct Policy and referred to in the Child Protection Policy and is reviewed annually. It is recognized that personal mobile phones have the potential to be used inappropriately and therefore the school has adopted the practice of ensuring that mobile phones are turned off and hidden away while staff are on duty and working with children. The office phone number is used by family to contact staff in cases of emergency during the school day.)*
- Volunteers must be aware of our child protection policy by having read our Safeguarding Children – an introduction to child protection pamphlet. Any concerns must be passed on straight away before leaving the premises.
- Volunteers must dress appropriately and in line with our Safer Care Code of Conduct Policy
- Volunteers must liaise with class teachers and work under their supervision.
- Volunteers must not work alone with a child/children unless DBS checked and must consider their own personal safety. They must not be involved in intimate care duties or be alone in a room with a child.

### **Deployment of parent volunteers**

Volunteers may work on an ad hoc or more regular basis. Volunteers that work on an ad hoc basis will often arrange this with a class teacher. It may be that you have agreed to help on a school visit, a special theme day or with a one-off cookery lesson.

Volunteers who would like to work on a more regular basis, for example half a day per week, should meet with the Headteacher to discuss this. They will be asked to complete an EPM Registration Form and references may be required.

Volunteers will often help in their child's own class and must be prepared to remain neutral whilst working alongside their children. However in some cases it may be best for the children for the volunteer to work in another class.

The overall decision lies with the Head and class teachers.

### **Health and safety**

When any volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office and collect a visitor badge which must be worn at all times in school. Please indicate your arrival time and which class you will be visiting. Volunteers must also sign out, stating the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is an important part of our fire safety procedure. Should the fire alarm sound whilst you are in school, proceed to the nearest exit and assemble on the school field near the class you are working with.

### **Complaints procedure**

Any complaint made about a volunteer will be referred directly to the Headteacher.

Any complaint made by a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again.
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class.
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

### **Monitoring and review**

The day to day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team. The Headteacher will report to governors annually on the number of parent volunteers in school and summarise their value and impact in supporting children's learning.

This policy will be reviewed as necessary.

Date policy agreed: 14<sup>th</sup> November 2016

**Volunteering in school**

- All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned.
- Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.
- Volunteers must be good role models for the EJ Way and encourage all children to follow it. Any misdemeanours or unacceptable behaviour should be reported to the class teacher.
- Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out.
- Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice / guidance from the teacher in the event of any query or problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although they 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!
- Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.
- Please do not go out onto the playground during playtimes. You are welcome to join staff for coffee/tea during morning and afternoon breaks.
- Please do not carry out any intimate care duties or be in a room alone with a child
- If a child does or tells you something that causes you concern, please tell the class teacher or Headteacher as soon as possible after the disclosure, in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.
- If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it is really helpful to know in advance, even if that's only a phone message on the morning in question.
- Confidentiality regarding what might be seen, heard or discussed within the class by children or adults is extremely important. Adults in school are bound by the rule of confidentiality that as a volunteer will also apply to you. Please do not discuss any issues that might arise in class with anyone other than the class teacher who is best placed to decide on the correct course of action.
- Mobile phones cannot be used when you are in direct contact with children and **MUST NOT** be used for photographing children. Please have them turned off and out of sight while working with children.
- Dress appropriately and in line with our Code of Conduct for All Adults Policy.

**Volunteering on school visits**

- Parents may not always have their own child in their group. The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.
- All children are told that they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times.
- If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group put on their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches unless stated by the teacher.
- The designated first aider (usually a teacher or teaching assistant) is responsible for all first aid and medication.
- The class teacher sets and leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day.
- Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions e.g. when to eat and drink.
- If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and associated parents in emergency situations.
- If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g. to take a child to the toilet, please inform another adult.
- Mobile phones cannot be used when you are in direct contact with children and **MUST NOT** be used for photographing children.

- Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality on visits as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these to the class teacher or Headteacher.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement and hand it to the school office. You will receive a copy for your records.

- I have received a copy of the school's Volunteer Policy and have read the Volunteer Guidelines.
- I am aware of the Code of Conduct for all adults in school
- I agree to treat information I learn from being a volunteer in school as confidential and will not share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team.
- If I have a concern or complaint I know I must direct these to the class teacher or head teacher.
- I will respect the professional judgement and listen to the guidance of the class or head teacher at all times.
- I understand that I may be required to undergo a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to advise the school of my suitability as a volunteer.
- I will not have my phone turned on or use it to make calls/texts or for photography while working with children.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide below your contact details and details of someone whom we may contact in the event of an emergency:

	My contact details	Emergency contact details
Name		
Address		
Home telephone		
Mobile telephone		
Email address		
Date of Birth		

Do you have any disabilities / other needs we need to take into account when working as a volunteer in school?

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Thank you very much for volunteering your time to help in our school. Your help is greatly appreciated.