

# St John and St James CoE Primary school

## Policy on Volunteer Helpers

### 1 Introduction

1.1 We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. We also want to encourage parents, students and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways. However, our overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care. This document sets out our school's policy, which is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as possible, and are provided at the same time with the best possible security.

1.2 The school has a variety of adults and students working on the premises at any one time. They can be categorised as follows:

1.2.1 Paid full- or part-time staff employed by the school:

- teachers;
- teaching assistants;
- SEN teaching assistants and learning support assistants
- nursery nurse;
- site managers
- cleaners;
- lunchtime playleaders
- office staff

1.2.2 Adult workers employed by another organisation:

- chef and kitchen staff
- sport coaches
- music teachers;
- trainee teachers and child care students
- LA advisers and inspectors;
- health visitors and other external health or educational therapists/ specialists.
- contract workers (e.g. an electrician, heating engineer, ICT technician).

1.2.3 Volunteer helpers:

- parents, grandparents, relatives of children, family friends or other adult helpers working alongside teachers;
- students on work experience.
- members of the local community
- people who have a particular talent, expertise or interest in a class or school based topic.

This policy sets out the arrangements for volunteer helpers.

## **2 Volunteer helpers**

2.1 Volunteer helpers support the school in a number of ways, including:

- supporting individual pupils;
- hearing pupils read;
- helping with classroom organisation, resources, labelling, displays, games and books;
- helping with the supervision of children on school trips;
- helping with group work;
- helping with art or subjects involving other practical activities.

2.2 Volunteer helpers are not allowed to do the following activities:

- take responsibility for all or some of the whole class;
- change very young children, or supervise them changing;
- supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities;
- take children off the school site without a teacher in charge.

The responsibility for the health and welfare of the child remains with the class teacher at all times.

## **3 Signing in**

3.1 When helpers arrive in the school, they must sign in at the reception desk. They will be given a visitor's badge, which they should wear at all times. The signing-in sheet will give the date and time of arrival. They must also sign out, stating the time they are leaving, and return their badge before they leave.

3.2 Members of the leadership team share the responsibility for Parental Involvement in school and for organising class helpers. Volunteers are recruited during the school year in response to a general letter or through personal contact by the teachers. A short training session will follow before volunteers are asked into the school on a regular basis. Individual teachers will be given names of volunteers, it is their responsibility to contact their volunteers and make arrangements. Some volunteers might be new to school; others recruited from previous years. Potential volunteers can approach the school throughout the year. Similarly, if a need arises for extra volunteers or volunteers with a specific expertise, a further letter will be sent out.

## **4 Police checks**

4.1 For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have police clearance through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) before they work in the school.

4.2 The headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes it will not be in the best interests of the children.

## **5 Deployment of classroom helpers**

5.1 It is the policy of this school that parent helpers do not support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child, and perhaps place the class teacher in an uncomfortable situation. Helpers will be asked to support in classes in which there is the most need for individual support. Adults help in school throughout the school day. They could be asked to help with a range of activities and tasks in and out of the classroom, depending on their preferences and skills. Arrangements are made for adults, who are unable to come into school, to take tasks home. Class volunteers might stay with the same class teacher or move with their child's class in successive years.

- 5.2 Volunteers should not chew gum/ eat sweets in class and should wear smart/ casual clothing.
- ◆ Volunteers should be supervised adequately whilst on site.
  - ◆ Volunteers should be provided with, and required to use, any personal protective equipment necessary to safeguard their health and safety.
  - ◆ Volunteers should be aware of the Fire Safety Procedures.
  - ◆ Volunteers should notify the school if they are unable to come in.
  - ◆ **Confidentiality and discretion are very important. Volunteers should not discuss a child's work or behaviour with the child's parents or anyone outside the school.**

Volunteers are asked not to spend break time in the Staff Room. Due to overcrowding and the size of the Staff Room their break will be after or before the school staff. The school has tea- and coffee-making facilities for volunteers and a small contribution would be kindly appreciated. If a school lunch is required on a particular day this will need to be ordered via the school office by 9.30am and the cost is £3.00 a meal. Students on work experience should eat in the workroom and are not permitted to bring fast food onto the school premises during lunchtimes.

### **Training**

Extra training for volunteers in school, may be provided if and when available.

## **6 Monitoring and review**

- 6.1 The day-to-day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher, who will report to the governors annually, stating the number of adult volunteer helpers in the school, and summarising their value to the children.
- 6.2 This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.