

Policy for volunteers in school

The aim of this policy is to:

- Provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
- To encourage the wider community to engage with the 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 the school staff and students on work experience. At St. Mary's 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 volunteers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as computing, art, cooking, and especially reading, and usually work with individuals or small groups in school. In addition, volunteers often help when the children are taken on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of our Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA).

These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, teachers and children – the experience is positive and rewarding.

Aims and Ethos

St. Mary's is a good school with great teams of pupils, staff and governors. Our vision is of a **caring**, loving community where we light the spark of **curiosity**, build on children's individual talents and give children and adults the **courage** to be the best that they can be. Everyone is welcome at St Mary's and we are committed to ensuring that all our pupils are given the opportunity to access a high-quality education that allows children to shine whilst nurturing their creativity and building upon their talents.

This vision statement, agreed by all, is essential to the way we work and we expect all stake holders to be committed to 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 interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. The Headteacher 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.

All volunteers will be risk assessed by the DSL or Deputy DSL to determine whether an enhanced DBS check is necessary. All risk assessments will be recorded using the agreed format. Where volunteers are regularly working in school with children in unsupervised activities then an enhanced DBS check and a barred list check will be carried out.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, trips etc. or who do not have unsupervised access to children do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mrs. Calabria
The Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mr. Ball

Volunteer induction

Before starting at St. Mary's volunteers will be asked to fill in a School volunteer details form (Appendix 1).

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

- Confidentiality
- Child protection and safeguarding including the Prevent Duty
- Medical and first aid issues
- Behaviour policy
- Health and safety
- Fire

Deployment of volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas in the school where there is the most need. Parents with children who attend the school will normally be asked to support pupils in a different class from that of their child as this can be distracting for the child. It is helpful if you explain to your child you will be in school but not necessarily in his/her class.

Volunteer roles in school

Many of the activities we ask volunteers to help us with are the sort of things 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 a computer, playing games, making things, cooking, gardening, sewing or coming with us on trips. The teacher will give you clear guidance about the activity and all the materials you need.

Procedures and Protocols

When a volunteer arrives at St. Mary's they need to sign in at the school office on the form provided and sign out again when they leave. A red lanyard must be worn by those adults not DBS checked and a blue one if the DBS has come through.

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

Confidentiality

While in school volunteers may become aware of sensitive issues relating to individual children. It is important volunteers do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parents. The teachers have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in school 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 school. Any concerns about a child must be passed to the class teacher or head teacher.

Volunteers are asked to sign a Volunteer in School Protocol (see appendix) a copy of which will be kept in school.

Safeguarding concerns about a child must be shared with one of the designated safeguarding leads.

Guidelines for supporting children in school.

Children should be encouraged to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary. 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. 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, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser.

Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

Mobile phones

You must not use your mobile phone around children. Please keep your mobile phone switched off and in your pocket or bag whilst in school. Phones may be used in the staffroom.

First Aid

Volunteers should not administer first aid; several staff members have been trained in First Aid at Work and should be called if needed.

Appendix 1

School volunteer details

Volunteer Name:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
If a parent of a pupil/s in school, please give names and classes	
Have you read the school volunteer policy?	
Do you have a current DBS clearance?	
If you have, an original copy will need to be shown to the admin staff in the office.	
If not, you will need to complete one, please see the admin staff in the office.	
Which area/s of the school would you prefer to work in?	
Do you have any specific strengths or skills that could be utilised?	
Are there any activities you cannot support?	
Which days and times are you available to support in school?	

Appendix 2

Volunteers in school protocol

Please read and sign below to confirm your agreement with the following expectations as a volunteer.

As a school we agree to:

- Share the school safeguarding procedures with you.
- Share the school behaviour policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour
- Explain your tasks carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children
- Treat you with respect and care
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with
- Let you know the overall plan for your sessions and let you know if the plan for the day has changed
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality

We agree not to ask you to:

- Deal with difficult or challenging behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel unprepared to complete

Signed:

Date:

Headteacher/Class teacher/Volunteer co-ordinator

Volunteer Helper's name:

As a volunteer I agree to:

- Act in a professional and appropriate manner at all times.
- Complete appropriate DBS safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations prior to starting as a volunteer helper.
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures
- Treat any information with complete confidentiality
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the teacher at all times.
- Use the school behaviour policy and inform the teacher of any concerns I have.
- Inform the teacher of anything I see or hear that concerns me in school.
- Inform the school if I am unable to come in.
- Dress appropriately.

I agree not to:

- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team.

Signed:

Date: