

Parent/Carer Volunteer Guidelines

Thank you for volunteering to help our children and teachers. We feel that the involvement of families in children's education is vital, and we encourage active participation in many ways. In whatever way parents offer their time, we are always extremely grateful.

The aim of this guide is to give you all the information you need to make your time both worthwhile and enjoyable. The guide applies to both activities which take place in school as well as school trips.

Thank you for your support.

Safeguarding

- There is a requirement for schools to carry out a Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) criminal record check and barred list check for all staff and volunteers who have regular, unsupervised contact with children. All schools need to hold a register of the checks undertaken. For you to regularly work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS application, this is an online form which will be initiated by the school office team. Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children.
- A DBS check may not be required if school staff assess that your contact with children in school, or on a trip will be always supervised by a member of staff. This is assessed in light of the role you have offered to undertake.
- If a child tells you something that causes you concern, either in school or on a trip, please inform a member of staff as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear. We will follow our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in such circumstances.
- Mobile phones and cameras must not be used when volunteering (in school or on a trip).

Confidentiality

- It is very important that all staff, parent/carers volunteers and other adults working in school work to a policy of confidentiality. 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 or on a trip. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent/carer if you know them. The teachers have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child.
- Volunteers working in classrooms should 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.
- Volunteers in school are asked not to use the time to deal with issues regarding their own children. If you wish to speak to the class teacher or another member of staff, you should make an appointment in the usual way.
- Please do not worry about your child's behaviour while you are helping as often, he/she will behave quite differently if mum/dad/carer is there. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class or on a trip and settle down.
- Please don't have favourites – as humans we are drawn to certain individuals, but it is important that all children in school and on trips are given equal time and attention.

- Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
- Please do not lift, carry, cuddle or move a child in any way.
- If you are unable to be in school or accompany a school trip, please let the class teacher know either in person or by telephoning the office.

Guidance for Volunteers for school trips

We appreciate your help on school trips – it would be difficult to organise visits outside school without parent/carer volunteers.

- If you have any questions about a school trip, please see the class teacher.
- The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.
- Parents/carers may not always have their own child in their group. Please talk to the class teacher if you would like to know whether this would be the case prior to offering your help if this is or isn't your preference.
- Mobile phones and cameras must not be used when volunteering on a school trip.
- All children need to be treated equally e.g. your own child, or children in your group, cannot be given food/sweets. Some of our children have food allergies that you will not be aware of.
- All children are told that they must always stay with their group and the group adult. If you are concerned about the behaviour or wellbeing of a child in your group, please inform the trip leader as soon as is practically possible – they will address the issue.
- If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group to put on and fit their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bucket/bags, if needed.
- The class teacher is responsible for ALL first aid and medication – appropriately qualified members of staff will administer this if necessary.
- The class teacher 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 a member of school staff know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school in emergency situations.
- If you need to leave your group for any reason e.g. to check for personal messages, take an emergency call or send a text a message, please inform another adult so that they can temporarily supervise your group.
- Staff will supervise scheduled toilet trips during the visit. If a child needs to go to the toilet outside of these times, please ask a member of staff to support and supervise this.
- If appropriate, children will be permitted to bring their own money on the trip. This should not be supplemented in any way nor gifts bought for individual children or groups.
- Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher, or if you would rather, the Head teacher on return to school.
- Please note that if this policy is not adhered to, you may not be able to help in the future.

Thank you for volunteering to help our children and teachers - we really do appreciate your help.