



Policy for Volunteers in School

Introduced: January 2015

Reviewed: Autumn 19

St Peter's Primary school actively follows the 'Volunteers in School Guidance' from Devon County Council. The use of volunteer helpers in school is becoming increasingly common and important. In order to deliver an effective, high quality curriculum, school must utilise the strengths and experience of all staff and also needs to engage parents, grandparents and others in providing excellence. Our volunteers, mainly but not exclusively parents, are an essential element in our work. As such their use must be carefully considered and planned for. There are some overriding considerations that staff and volunteers should be aware of.

1. **Volunteers must be vetted.** They must complete an application form, with two referees. *The exception to this is student volunteers from other schools or colleges. These will be vetted by staff from the School they attend.* All volunteers will have to agree to a check of their background to ensure there is no reason why they should not have access to children. A secure record of the DSB checks will be kept in the school office.
2. **Safeguarding training.**
All volunteers must attend the school 'raising awareness' level 1 safeguarding training, to ensure they are aware of the school's safeguarding duties, how to spot signs and symptoms of abuse, how to report it, and safer working practices. All volunteers must read the school's Safeguarding Policy and part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education. Volunteers must also sign the code of conduct for adults.
Volunteers are given clear guidance on safeguarding children, child protection, and their conduct whilst in school. No voluntary helper should ever be left in a vulnerable position, i.e. never with a child in a place/situation where they cannot be observed.
3. **Volunteers must be treated with courtesy and respect.** Whilst some will have the skills or expertise of an experienced classroom assistant or teacher, initially tasks may appear 'menial', but everyone should feel that their contribution is valued and appreciated.
4. **Volunteers should not be asked to tackle tasks beyond their scope.** If necessary, advice and support should be offered to enable the volunteer to feel comfortable with the tasks. Teachers should always explain the learning objectives and expected outcomes of the children so that helpers feel confident about what they are doing. If possible, planning which demonstrates the activities involved should be photocopied for the helper. Don't ask helpers to do things they are not happy with. Some parents prefer to help with practical tasks while others do not. Take time to find out what they are happy doing, it makes the working relationship much more productive and means that they will keep coming back!
5. Volunteers are asked to treat any information, views or opinions they have received whilst in school **as confidential**. However, staff should be sensitive to the need for strict confidentiality in some matters and if necessary some conversations should only take place in the Head's Office.
6. All volunteers are asked to **'sign in' and 'sign out'** of the school.

7. If anyone working within school has a **concern about a helper**, it is in the interest of the children that the issue is resolved. In the first instance a quiet word may settle the issue. For more serious issues, teachers should inform the Head teacher.

8. **Supervision of Volunteers.**

During a visit to the School each volunteer should be designated to a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer, it would be expected that time is taken to ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role and that there is mutual agreement and understanding. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is however essential that the volunteer is clear which member of staff has this responsibility.

9. **School Protocols.** In fairness to all concerned, volunteers must be made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the School; the key 'dos' and 'don'ts' for children and adults. This should include procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and, importantly, details of first aid and emergency arrangements such as procedures to follow in case of fire. As part of their induction to life at the School, volunteers should also be provided with basic information such as a plan of the campus and details of those facilities available to them eg staff room, toilets etc.

It is essential that volunteers are made aware of the following procedures:-

- expectations with regard to confidentiality;
- access to information related to pupils and/or staff;
- expected level of behaviour;
- School's Equal Opportunities policy – especially focussing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language;
- the School's Complaints procedure;
- the School's Code of Conduct (see end).

10. **Insurance:** Volunteers should be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering for the school they are covered by the LA for third party liability only and the limitations of this insurance should be explained carefully to volunteers. They may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property. Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events, (sport, music etc) must provide documentary evidence that their car insurance covers this.

11. The school really **values the work** of its volunteers and will formally recognise this at least annually e.g. through an invitation to the end of year Celebration Assembly. At the end of a sustained period of service as a volunteer, the school will invite the volunteer to one of our weekly Celebration assemblies to acknowledge the service the volunteer has given to the school.

The gateway for volunteers into the school is via the school website:

<http://www.st-peters-school.org.uk/about-us/volunteering/>

The code of conduct for volunteers is below. This must be read, understood and signed.

The protocol for admitting volunteers into the school is below.

Volunteer code of Conduct

Examples of Acceptable Behaviour

People behave acceptably when they:

- Afford dignity, trust and respect for everyone and themselves;
- Have awareness of the effects of their behaviour on others and only make reasonable and manageable demands;
- Communicate honestly and openly, clearly stating what they need and expect of others;
- Provide and are receptive to honest feedback based on evidence; and
- Challenge discriminatory language and behaviour in an appropriate way.

Examples of Unacceptable Behaviour:

- Using aggressive language, threatening, ridiculing, ignoring people or repeatedly shouting;
- Telephoning people at home unnecessarily (for example, demanding work when the person is absent due to sickness or ill health);
- Focusing only on weaknesses;
- Bringing up details of someone's private life inappropriately;
- Leaving impossibly long lists of tasks and making unreasonable demands;
- Criticising people or maliciously gossiping about them in their absence;
- Ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail;
- Comments or jokes, about distinctive peoples and nationalities;
- Frequent comments about aspects of physical appearance or using forms of address that are demeaning;
- Threatening or implying, without reason, that, as a colleague, you will cause the person to lose his/her job or fail to get a promotion or suffer some other form of career difficulty or financial disadvantage;
- Coercing someone to join the harassment/bullying of another person;
- Excluding or marginalising someone or refusing to engage with them appropriately.

This list is not exhaustive. It is simply a guide to help individuals consider their own and others behaviour and gain an understanding of what behaviours are unacceptable in the workplace.

Standards Expected of Volunteers

The standards expected of all volunteers include but are not limited to:

- maintaining standards of behaviour in keeping with the interests and standing of the school/DCC. This includes behaviour outside of working hours and in any form that is visible to the public, including social networking or any other electronic medium
- devoting full attention while at school to the duties of their position and in doing so acting with responsibility, good judgement and in good faith
- not divulging to any unauthorised person or making personal use of confidential information connected with the school/DCC, either intentionally or through negligent behaviour
- observing the rules, regulations and instructions adopted by the school/DCC
- following appropriate safeguarding procedures
- participating fully in any investigation into alleged incidents and/or allegations including attending meetings as directed
- using electronic communications appropriately
- ensuring that information brought to light as a result of any investigation is treated with discretion

Some specific guidance for volunteers:

- We do not use mobile phones in any classrooms. You are never allowed to use it to take photos of children. You must challenge any visitors using their mobile phone in school.
- Never use any kind of physical punishment or chastisement such as smacking or hitting.
- Do not smoke in front of any child or young person.
- Do not use unprescribed drugs or be under the influence of alcohol.
- Generally you should never give children presents or personal items.
- You should not invite a young person to your home or arrange to see them outside the set activity times
- You should not engage in any sexual activity (this would include using sexualised language) with a young person you meet through duties, or start a personal relationship with them: this would be an abuse of trust

and is illegal. Do not engage in rough or sexually provocative games.

- Avoid being alone with a child. In situations where this may be needed (for example where a young person wants to speak in private) think about ways of making this seem less secret: for example by telling another worker or volunteer what you are doing and where you are, leaving a door ajar, being in earshot of others.
- Volunteers should be aware of the potential for misunderstanding when touching children. If it is an accepted part of an activity, touching should be appropriate to the situation and follow the organisations safeguarding Policy. Comforting a child who is upset, administering first aid or supporting a participant in an activity is acceptable and necessary behaviour. Workers should, however, endeavour to minimise any possible misunderstanding of their actions. Physical contact should be open and initiated by the child's needs, e.g. for a hug when upset.
- Do not kiss children.
- Avoid giving children a lift in your car except in emergencies or on pre-planned school business e.g. driving to sports event.
- If you have to speak to a child about their behaviour, remember you are challenging what they did not who they are. Focus on the behaviour and not the child.
- That you agree to have regard to the Church of England foundation of the school and not to behave in any way contrary to the interests of the foundation. This includes your behaviour in public and on social media.
- School equipment, including computers, are not to be used to access pornographic websites or other websites that are of an offensive or sexual nature.

Absences

Please let us know in advance wherever possible if you are going to be absent so that we can make sure that we inform the relevant member(s) of staff.

Badges

After signing in, volunteers are requested to wear a 'Volunteer' badge.

Behaviour

The school has a behaviour policy. Please discuss this with your class teacher.

Child Protection

Your Child Protection Officer is Mr Hitchcock and the Deputy Child Protection Officers are Mr Lee, Mrs Broad, Mrs Cawthera and Mrs Fuller.

If you have any concerns about any child the Child Protection Officer should be informed straight away. These might be worries about verbal, physical, sexual or emotional abuse or cruelty. Please refer to the School Safeguarding Policy which will tell you what to look out for..

Fire Alarm

There are instructions on posters around the buildings and in every classroom to indicate the exit points; please make sure you are familiar with these and also that you are aware of your nearest fire call point. When the fire bell (electronic) rings, **children and volunteers must be silent and leave the main building by the nearest exit.**

The Assembly Point is at the bottom of the field.

Please ensure that you have signed in/and out.

First Aid

Our appointed First Aiders are listed in the foyer. In the Staff Room we have a Medical Needs board which contains information about children that have more severe medical needs and a care plan is in place for them.

Insurance

"The County Council expects all employees and pupils to accept full responsibility for their personal possessions, including money and they are advised to take out the necessary insurance themselves to cover the risks involved."

Out of School Visits

Volunteer helpers are covered under the School Insurance and ultimate responsibility for child safety rests with the staff.

Personal Belongings

Personal belongings can be left in the Staff Room at your own risk.

School Dinners

If you would like a school meal (prepared by our own kitchen staff) then please order it by letting our administrator know first thing in the morning on the day (by 9.30am). Adult meals cost £3 and are payable in advance. Our Catering Manager (Juliette) is happy to meet any dietary requirements.

School Term Dates

Please find our school calendar on the [school website www.st-peters-school.org.uk/](http://www.st-peters-school.org.uk/)

Smoking

The Staff Room, like the whole school, is a “No Smoking” area.

Tea and Coffee

Tea and Coffee are available in the Staff Room, please help yourself. Milk is kept in the top fridge in the Staff Room. We have no set mugs etc. Please put dirty crockery in the dishwasher. Emptying and filling the dishwasher and setting it going at certain times a day is the responsibility of the staff on a rota basis.

Times of the School Day are available on the school website.

Cautions or investigations by children’s agencies or Police.

You must agree to let the school know if you receive a caution, any criminal or civil charge or are under investigation/assessment from a children’s service (e.g. from Social Services).

Volunteer Declaration

I have read and understood the volunteer policy and code of conduct.

I have read and understood the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

I have read part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

I have read and understood this policy, including the code of conduct for volunteers.

I have read and understood the Health and Safety policy.

I agree to let the school know if I receive a caution, any criminal or civil charge or I am under investigation/assessment from a children's service (e.g. from Social Services).

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Volunteer protocol/tick list for office staff

1. Volunteer submits application form online or on paper. (See website)
2. Volunteer brings in ID and proof of address for DBS check.
3. DBS:
 - a. started,
 - b. issued
 - c. and added to Single Central Record.
4. References:
 - a. taken up,
 - b. checked
 - c. and added to Single Central Record.
5. Volunteer invited to Safeguarding training.
6. Volunteer attended Safeguarding training and recorded on Single Central Record.
7. The following policies have been issued: Safeguarding and Child Protection, KCSIE, Volunteer (including Code of Conduct.), Health and Safety.
8. Policies read and declaration returned (as part of Volunteer policy) and added to Single Central Record.
9. Head notified that the volunteer is now ready to begin work.