



School Volunteer Policy

March 2020

Approved by Chair _____

Review Date _____

Overview

The aim of this policy is to:

- 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 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. Thank you for volunteering to help and support our school community. At Villiers Primary & Nursery 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 parents, carers and 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 ICT, art, cooking, and especially reading and usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, staff and children - the experience is positive and rewarding.

Aims and Ethos

Villiers Primary & Nursery is a good school with wonderful pupils and a great staff and governor team. Our vision is to develop a learning community in which everyone is supported in becoming a caring, collaborative, critical and creative thinker. As an inclusive school we celebrate diversity and value the achievements of all children. We are committed to providing the greatest possible access for all children by providing a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which is appropriate for meeting their needs. We particularly want to ensure that parents and pupils are fully participative in the process. This is key to the way we work and we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement with it and to work hard to achieve it.

Safeguarding

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, volunteers who are not already known to the school will be asked to meet the Head Teacher or SLT to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. The Head Teacher 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. We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. All schools need to hold a register of the checks

undertaken. For you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS online check. We will help you get the process started. 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. Office staff can help you with this process. Those who help at specific events, e.g., school fair, relatives in school days, etc., who do not have unsupervised access to children, do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children.

Becoming a Volunteer in School

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

- Confidentiality.
- Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty.
- Child Protection.
- Health & Safety.
- Fire.

Deployment of Volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need for support. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting for the child and perhaps can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the Head Teacher's discretion. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all the children and that he/she will not be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g., supporting practical science work).

Volunteer Roles in School

Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that 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 the computer.
- Playing games.
- Making things.
- Cooking.
- Gardening.
- Sewing.
- Topic related studies.
- Coming with us on visits.

The teacher will give you:

- Clear guidelines about the activity.
- All the materials you need.

Procedures and Protocols Health and Safety/Safeguarding

When a volunteer arrives in the school, they must sign in at the school office. Please indicate your arrival time and which class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for. A visitor sticker must always be worn in school. Volunteers with a DBS clearance will have been identified to staff members. The Head Teacher has the authority to withdraw the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

Confidentiality

It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the schoolwork to a policy of confidentiality. While in school, you are likely to become aware of issues relating to individual children. 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. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent if you know them. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in classrooms 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. If a volunteer ever has any concerns about a child, they must speak to the class teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.

Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the Prevent Duty about a child must be shared immediately with one of the designated officers for child protection as soon as possible after the disclosure. The designated officers for child protection are Mrs Westwood, Head Teacher, and Mrs Woodward, Assistant Head Teacher & Miss Cummings (Pastoral Team).

Guidelines for Supporting Children in School

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary.
- There is no rush. We give the children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.

- 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 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 product.
- When playing games with the children, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser.
- It is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.
- Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

Housekeeping

- Mobile phones - we would be most grateful if you could keep your mobile phone switched off whilst helping in school, and to place the phone in a secure place.
- Tea / Coffee arrangements - if you are in school over the break period, there are tea and coffee making facilities for visitors in the staffroom which you are welcome to use – this is free of charge.
- Photocopier - the photocopier is located in the staffroom. You may be asked to use this machine to support the class teacher in preparing resources. Please ask in the school office if you are unsure of how to use it.
- First Aid - please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or teacher on playground duty if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.
- Fire alarm - if the fire alarm sounds, please make your way safely to the nearest exit, guiding the child you are working with away from the main class area and follow the lead of the class teacher.

Attendance

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.

References - Occasionally, volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months attendance of regular volunteering (e.g., once a week) before we feel able to provide a

volunteer reference. We believe that this is fair to both prospective employers and candidates.

Thank you! - In case we forget to say so, please be assured that we really do appreciate your help. If you have any worries or queries, please let us know - we are always willing to listen.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years unless there are any changes within the Trust.