



Shottermill Junior School

Visitor & Volunteer Policy

Governors' Committee Responsible:	Children & Learning Committee
Nominated Lead Member of Staff:	Headteacher
Status & Review Cycle:	4 Years
Next Review Date:	Spring 2021

Information and Code of Conduct for Volunteers

Shottermill Junior School highly values parents and others who volunteer to help out with school activities. We hope to encourage your support, contributions and assistance. Many school activities would be at risk if it weren't for your help and many of our pupils benefit greatly from it.

It is our duty to ensure that whilst you are engaged in voluntary activities for the school that we care for you and ensure your safety. We also, of course, have a duty to ensure that our pupils' welfare is promoted, they are cared for appropriately and they are safeguarded from any harm.

This information is to inform you of what measures we need to apply to ensure that all volunteers and pupils are safe and cared for. It is a very important part of the induction process so please read this document carefully, sign the attached forms and then return to the school office.

The Headteacher is the Coordinator for volunteer helpers and is in charge of their induction and work programme.

Purpose of our Volunteers

- To enrich the educational possibilities for the children.
- To support the teaching within the school.
- To promote the partnership between home and school.
- To offer an insight into the world of work through our Bright Futures' programme.
- To give adults the opportunity to use their talents in school for the mutual benefit of the children and themselves.
- To give parents and other adults confidence.
- To enable children to have more time to communicate their ideas and thus develop their understanding.

We want our volunteers to enjoy this experience and gain a real insight into the work of the school and how education works.

It is possible that an individual offering to volunteer may not be placed. This may be because there are no spaces. It may be because it is considered that acceptance may have a detrimental effect on a child (possibly the volunteer's) or on a member of staff. The Headteacher will use their discretion.

- Students in further education or in secondary school pupils on work experience placements are considered and accepted on application.
- Volunteers do not need to be Parents or Carers. Grandparents and other members of the community may also apply to volunteer.

Disclosure and Barring Service

We have a responsibility to ensure that all adults working for the school are suitable people to work with children. The Department for Children Schools and Families and the Local Authority set out guidance regarding when adults working on behalf of the school must be subject to these checks. This means that depending on the nature and regularity of your help, also the level contact you have with children, we will need to ask for your permission for a DBS check.

This check is to ensure that you are not included on Independent Safeguarding Authority list of those people who have been barred from working with children, you do not have relevant convictions, and the police do not have any other information about you which suggests that you may be unsuitable to work with children.

We appreciate that some volunteers find this intrusive and unacceptable; however, we wish to reassure you that this information is solely for the purpose of ensuring that our pupils are safe from unsuitable people. We can further assure you that this information will be kept confidential to those who 'need to know' (usually the Headteacher and the Local Authority) and securely stored. If you do have convictions this does not mean that you will be considered unsuitable, usually this would only apply if a person has convictions for offences against children, sex offences or offences of serious violence.

No checks will be undertaken without your agreement and you will receive a copy of the check.

In some instances we may ask for your permission to seek information from another person regarding your suitability to work with children e.g. from an employer.

If you have any concerns or would like further information about checks, please discuss these with Headteacher.

Welfare and Safety of Volunteers and Children

We undertake to ensure that any activities which you are involved with are planned properly and safely, also that you are consulted on and informed of these plans. This helps us to make sure that you are happy and comfortable with the arrangements, also that you have the opportunity to make us aware of any anticipated difficulties, reservations or problems which arise. We further undertake to ensure that at all times you will have access to a member of the school staff should any emergencies arise or you need to talk to someone immediately regarding any difficulties.

Code of Safe Conduct

It is essential that we acknowledge that the vast majority of volunteers behave appropriately whilst working with our pupils. However, expected conduct of adults working in or for a school is sometimes different to that which applies whilst caring for our own children. Conduct is also governed by certain laws and government guidance. Furthermore, staff and volunteers sometimes express uncertainty as to what is and isn't acceptable and ask for guidance regarding those behaviours. It is essential these are not illegal, improper or could be misconstrued by another person.

The following, therefore, gives a guide to appropriate conduct whilst working in or on behalf of the school (e.g. residential visits, out of school activities). Adherence to this code will ensure that both children and adults are safe, including from the possibility of allegations being made against them.

You should always:

- Adhere to all school policies, many of which are specifically written with safeguarding in mind. For example: Child Protection, Behaviour, Physical Intervention, Anti Bullying, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Use of Images (photography and DVD), Disability Discrimination, E safety.
- Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner at all times.
- Provide a good example and 'positive role model' to the pupils
- Observe other people's right to confidentiality (Unless you need to report something to the Headteacher or DSL: Designated Safeguarding Lead, e.g. concerns about a child protection issue).
- Treat all children equally; never confer favour on particular children, or build 'special relationships' with individual children, except where one to one working is part of a plan agreed with your manager (e.g. for counselling, tuition, mentoring or other purpose).

Any concerns should be reported as soon as possible to the Head teacher / DSL (or in the case of an allegation concerning the Headteacher the Chair of Governors):

- Any behaviour or situation which may give rise to complaint, misunderstanding or misinterpretation, against yourself.
- Any difficulties that you are experiencing, for example, coping with a child presenting particularly challenging behaviour; situations where you anticipate that you may not be sufficiently qualified, trained or experienced to deal with or handle appropriately.
- Any behaviours of another adult in the school which give you cause for concern or breach of this code of conduct or other school policies and procedure.

Racial Incidents

Any racial incident or comment witnessed in school must be reported to the Headteacher. The person reporting the incident will be asked to complete a Racial Incident Form. The Headteacher will act on this and incidents will be reported to the LA via a termly return.

As a volunteer, you should never:

- Behave in a manner that could lead a reasonable person to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
- Touch children in a manner which is or may be considered sexual, threatening, gratuitous or intimidating.
- Discriminate either favourably or unfavourably towards any child.
- Give personal contact details, text email or telephone, or make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet children outside of school.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with children.
- Push, hit, kick, punch, slap, throw missiles at or smack a child or threaten to do so
- Make inappropriate* remarks or jokes of a personal, sexual, racial, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.
- Be sarcastic, embarrass or humiliate, make remarks or "jokes" to children of a personal, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate* or offensive nature
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts unless arranged through your line manager / Headteacher, for example, outgrown sports kit, football boots or uniform.
- Allow, encourage or condone children to act in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Behave in an illegal or unsafe manner, for example, exceeding the speed limit, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, driving a vehicle which is known to be un-roadworthy or otherwise unsafe or not having appropriate insurance, using a mobile phone whilst driving, fail to use seatbelts and drive in a safe manner at all time whilst transporting children.

- Undertake any work with children when you are not in a fit and proper physical or emotional state to do so. For example: under the influence of medication which induces drowsiness; with a medical condition which dictates that you should not be caring for children; under extreme stress which is likely to impair your judgement.

Confidentiality

Volunteer helpers are reminded that they will see all that happens in the daily working of the school. Whatever volunteers see or hear, particularly concerning children must not be repeated, except to a member of staff. Teachers will respond to different situations for different reasons. Volunteers are reminded that the staff are professionals and will have received training for working with children and managing their behaviour. Volunteers may also overhear staff discussing pupils and their concerns.

Volunteers must remember that this is the teachers'/LSA's place of work and that they need to discuss issues with each other. These are of a highly confidential nature and must never be repeated out of school. Volunteers are however made aware of the Child Protection Policy and how this can be used if a Volunteer is concerned that something inappropriate is occurring in school.

All information and comments made in school remain confidential to school. It is unprofessional for staff, visitors or volunteers to comment on individual children to others outside school, including the child's parents except through the appropriate and official channels.

The Role of a Volunteer

Volunteers are given advice on how to work with children and their role can be outlined as follows:

Effective Support

If you are working with children try to talk to them in a quiet manner. Ask questions which involve them in conversation. Ideally you want them to explain their work and show that they understand.

Questions should therefore be open ended, e.g. begin questions as

"Why do you think? Rather than "Is that a?"

What if I am unsure about the work?

Before you begin a task with children the teacher will give you clear instructions. If you are unsure of any aspect please ask the teacher.

If while you are working with the children something unexpected occurs, ask for clarification. The teacher will be pleased that you asked.

This is often the case when hearing children read.

"Should I tell a word when a child gets stuck?"

"Should I make him/her sound it out?"

"How long should I give a child to try the word?"

"Should I give clues?"

"Should I read with the child?"

The answer to all the above is "It will depend on the age of the child, the individual child and the book". Ask the teacher what is generally required and if there are any special requirements.

Whose work is it anyway?

It is so tempting to do the work, 'I'll just cut it out for them', or 'I'll just mix the paint'. It is human nature to want to help someone who is not finding it easy. Children learn by doing and therefore must be allowed to have a go even if the end product doesn't look right. If a child really seems to be frustrated have a word with the teacher.

Behaviour

Children at Shottermill Junior School are well behaved and work very hard. They enjoy school but volunteers may see a child misbehaving as children do from time to time. Some will always test boundaries particularly with someone new.

The teaching staff will not expect a volunteer to have to deal with uncooperative children. If a volunteer is working with children who are being disruptive, the volunteer is asked to remind them calmly ONCE that they are expected to do the task sensibly. If the pupils do not respond, volunteers must return uncooperative pupils to the teacher. Volunteers must never chastise or touch a child.

P.E.

Adults are not allowed to actually play contact sports with children. The differences in physical size and strength could make it dangerous for the children. Volunteers can however help with the teaching of specific skills.

Site Safety and Security

It is the duty of the Local Authority to ensure the safety, health and welfare of all visitors to any of its premises. Where it is reasonably practicable, and to complement security systems, all visitors sign a visitor's book available in the school office.

All visitors are given a visitor badge and this should be clearly displayed at all times. Visitors, including volunteers, will not be allowed to enter unsupervised work areas unless accompanied by an appropriate member of staff and must observe any safety rules. In the event of an emergency situation, all volunteers will be directed to a place of safety by the member of the teaching staff for whom they are working. It is essential that the school site remains secure and all external doors are shut at all times during the school day.

School bells do not sound during the school day. Any alarm sounding should be assumed to be an emergency alarm and the building evacuated accordingly.

Volunteers are asked to telephone the school if they cannot come into school when expected.

Volunteers are reminded of important Health and Safety rules and guidance.

Ideally volunteers should not administer first aid, but it is important to be reminded of the following:

Accidents

- If a child is ill or has an accident to please tell the nearest member of staff at once.
- Disposable gloves to deal with wounds, sickness or other bodily fluids must be used.
- Blood or vomit should not be touched.
- If hypodermic needles or syringes are found they should not be touched.
- That all accidents are recorded in an accident book and that if they witness one they will be required to help to fill in the incident form.

Fire

Volunteers are asked to read the Fire Notices in the classrooms and corridors.

Electrical Equipment

If volunteers are using electrical equipment they are asked to check plugs and leads to make sure that they are safe. Any faults are to be reported to the teacher.

No volunteers will be left unsupervised with a child(ren) for example in a room without a member of school staff present. Volunteers will be allowed to work in open areas such as corridors and the library.

Educational Visits

A vital supporting role for volunteer helpers is when asked to accompany children on an educational visit. Educational visits are a regular and important part of the educational programme. It is therefore vital that the children get the maximum value from the experience. Sometimes professional guides are available to explain what the children are looking at. More often than not however the adults accompanying the visit have to act as the guide helping to interpret to the pupils what they are seeing.

Volunteer helpers accompanying such a visit will receive information from the class teacher indicating:

- A completed risk assessment.
- The objectives of the visit.
- A list of which children are with which adult.
- How specific children should be assisted (if applicable).
- What the pupils are allowed to do and where they can go.
- Specific skills, knowledge, understanding or attitudes the children should gain from the visit.
- Volunteers will not be expected to be an expert on a particular topic but should receive a copy of necessary information.

It is normal on visits that the children are divided into small groups each with an adult. Sometimes these groups move around together, sometimes independently. In either case as a group leader, volunteers should ensure they complete regular head counts to ensure they have all the children in their group. If they are concerned at any point on the visit, they should to the group leader.

Volunteers must also note the following:

- Children are never left unsupervised.
- Volunteer are not expected to deal with any inappropriate behaviour.
- Children who do not cooperate should be returned to a teacher as soon as possible.

Clubs

Any adult leading external clubs must ensure that they take a register at the beginning of the session. If there are any children who are not present, they must immediately report their absence to the school office.

Please note:

It is the perception of the person subject to a remark or action rather than your stated intention that defines 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate'.

I _____ have read the school's information for volunteers and agree to abide by the Code of Safe Conduct therein.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Many thanks for your support of the school and it's arrangements for the safety and care of children and adults in our school community.

Mrs K. Barnes
Headteacher