



**St Nicholas**  
C of E Primary School

# Volunteers Guide



**Adopted: November 2015**

**Review: November 2018**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 St Nicholas C of E Primary school is committed to creating a school in which the teaching and learning, achievements, attitudes and well-being of every member of the school matter. We seek to create opportunities for all children to achieve their very best in terms of academic attainments and personal attainments. We aim to make the curriculum accessible to all in a stimulating learning environment in which success is celebrated in all areas. We strive to make everyone feel welcome. We endeavour to work with parents and members of the community to create a supportive environment for learning.
- 1.2 St Nicholas C of E Primary School believes that the greatest resource a school can have is its staff. However, no teacher or teaching assistant can be expected to know everything or be good at everything. Nor must we presume that our professional skills are unique. Parents and other members of the community have many skills which can be deployed in a school on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the children's education. Volunteer helpers in the classroom, on trips and for extra- curricular activities are a great asset in helping teachers to offer a much broader and differentiated curriculum.
- 1.3 This booklet will provide volunteers with valuable information about "do's and don'ts" within the school system.
- 1.4 If any volunteers have specialist subjects or talents, please share them with staff and they will do their best to accommodate, and use, this valuable resource.

## **2. AIMS**

- 2.1 Volunteers cannot be expected just to "do". Their generous offer of time requires the school to equip them properly for the tasks we ask of them. Instructions must be clear. Volunteers support and supplement the teacher's work. They do not replace the teacher. Having volunteer helpers in school is not a one way route. It is hoped that not only will volunteers gain a real insight into the work of the school and how education works, but also that they will thoroughly enjoy the experience; perhaps their work in school may open doors for them.
- 2.2 Volunteer helpers are most welcome: -
  - To enrich the educational possibilities for the children.
  - To make more effective the teaching and learning within the school.
  - To promote the partnership between school, home and the community.
  - To demonstrate that education continues through life.
  - To give adults the opportunity to use their talents and expertise 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.
  - To release teachers from certain tasks, thus giving them more time for quality teaching, preparation and assessment.

### **3. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS formerly CRB)**

- 3.1 All helpers at St Nicholas C of E Primary School are required to complete a disclosure and barring service (DBS) online form. **This procedure can take weeks during periods of high activity so please allow plenty of time if you wish to support a particular event.** Until the school receives clearance and the volunteer has received their certificate they are unable to help in school, attend school trips or transport pupils to sports matches.
- 3.2 The Administrative Officer, Tina Ward is solely in charge of this procedure and parents can collect details on how to complete the online form from her.
- 3.3 DBS checks for volunteers must be renewed every 12 months.
- 3.4 Staff must not invite volunteers into school without the knowledge and consent of the Office Manager.

### **4. ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL**

- 4.1 All volunteers are required to report to the school office at the main entrance in order to sign in and collect a visitor's badge as it will allow the office staff to locate people who are visiting the site in the event of an emergency. It will also enable members of staff and pupils to identify you as an "official visitor". It is essential that you sign out and return your badge when you leave.
- 4.2 With regard to parking during your visits, there is no space in the car park and we request that you park, considerately, on St Faith's Road.

### **5. FIRE PROCEDURES**

- 5.1 In the event of a fire or an emergency a bell will ring continuously. Please make your way out of the building via the nearest Emergency Exit.
- 5.2 Visitors and volunteers will be checked against the visitor's book by a member of the Office Staff to ensure that everyone is safe.
- 5.3 Fire evacuation procedures are displayed in all classrooms.

### **6. WORKING WITH TEACHING STAFF**

- 6.1 Volunteer helpers should decide whether they wish to support their child's class teacher or the class teacher of a different class. It is recommended that if a volunteer wishes to help in their child's class they speak with the class teacher first to make sure it is in the child's best educational interests. If they are to help in their child's class, they should negotiate mutually suitable times directly with the class teacher.
- 6.2 If they wish to support the class teacher of a different class, they should make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss which class this might be.
- 6.3 The volunteer helper's role is to support the teacher. Discussion about the

teacher's needs and the volunteer helper's interests and skills should take place to determine the precise nature the support will take. Typically, a volunteer helper might support the teacher in preparing materials for lessons, doing administrative work such as filing, and working with a group of children or individual children in the classroom. Furthermore, helpers may be helping supervise a class on a trip, walking to the swimming pool or with a special event.

- 6.4 **READING:** Where volunteers are listening to children read, clear instruction should be given regarding the needs and next steps of the individual and a process of feeding back key information with the class teacher should be established.
- 6.5 Volunteer helpers should follow class conventions, rules and codes of conduct, and treat every child in the class the same way. The MORAL Code applies to everyone in school and volunteers should familiarise themselves with this.



- 6.6 Volunteers should not use mobile phones or cameras whilst working with pupils, unless directed by a teacher or in an emergency.

## 7. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 7.1 It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the 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. 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 at St Nicholas C of E Primary School have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child.

- 7.2 Volunteers working in classrooms or on trips 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.
- 7.3 Any conversation with parents outside the school about school matters observed whilst volunteering is a breach of the school's confidence. Even quite innocent comments could be misunderstood by other parents and carers. It is therefore important that anything you hear, or see, in school remains confidential. If you are worried in any way about a child then you must discuss the matter with the Headteacher, Senior Deputy Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher or class teacher immediately.

## **8. COFFEE AND LUNCH BREAKS**

- 8.1 Volunteers are welcome to join the staff in the staff room at break times and lunchtimes. Please help yourself to any item of crockery/cutlery but please place them in the dishwasher when finished.

## **9. USEFUL GUIDELINES**

- 9.1 Always treat pupils with respect and in the same sort of way that you would expect them to treat you.
- 9.2 Be friendly towards pupils but please do not encourage physical affection, e.g. hugging. Please do not initiate any physical contact. If supporting swimming, do not dry or dress the children.
- 9.3 Avoid shouting. If you speak normally they will have to be quiet in order to hear what you are saying.
- 9.4 Tell the pupil exactly what to do in as much detail as possible.
- 9.5 Don't be afraid to quietly and calmly correct a pupil who is misbehaving but never mishandle the pupils at any time. If in doubt, speak to the nearest member of staff.
- 9.6 Praise the pupils for their EFFORTS wherever possible.
- 9.7 Do not let pupils become silly, cheeky or over-friendly with you. They must learn to behave socially towards adults who are not close friends. Encourage them to be polite.
- 9.8 If you are concerned about a child for any reason, please speak with the class teacher or the Headteacher.



## **10. CHILD PROTECTION**

- 10.1 Volunteer helpers should be aware that Mr A Walsh (Headteacher) and Mrs O'Shea (Deputy Headteacher) are the designated staff members for Child Protection .
- 10.2 Any issues about a child's health and safety that come to a volunteer helper's attention through discussion with pupils should be referred to the class teacher in the first instance, or directly to the Headteacher where it is judged not to be practicable or appropriate to refer the matter to the class teacher.
- 10.3 Occasionally pupils feel that they can trust you enough to disclose personal information of a delicate nature. If this happens, explain to the pupil that you may have to share this information with another adult. Please report any disclosure to one of the designated members of staff AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.