

High Wycombe Church of England School

Volunteers in School Policy



COMMITTEE:	CURRICULUM
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WRITTEN BY AND DATE:	Celine Hawkins September 2019
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HIGH WYCOMBE CHURCH OF ENGLAND COMBINED SCHOOL

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL POLICY

‘Be Strong and Courageous’

INTRODUCTION

Volunteers bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community. We will not use volunteers to replace paid staff.

Our Volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Relations and carers of pupils and staff
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school
- Members of the local community
- Members of local religious groups

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children within sight of a member of staff
- Undertaking art and craft activities with children
- Running and helping out of school clubs
- Accompanying school visits
- Projects around the school e.g. gardening

SAFEGUARDING

High Wycombe Church of England School is committed to safeguarding pupils and expect its volunteers to share that commitment.

The school will seek DBS clearance for a volunteer before they are left unsupervised with any pupils. This is not required where a volunteer is engaged in a ‘one-off’ activity.

Where a volunteer is engaged in a ‘one-off’ activity e.g. helping supervise a group of pupils as part of a class visit, no formal checks are required. However, such volunteers, will be under the supervision of school staff.

All volunteers will have safeguarding information before starting at the school .

BECOMING A VOLUNTEER

Anyone wishing to become a Volunteer, either for a one-off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing children read, should liaise with a member of staff or the school office. Letters may also be sent requesting help to parents and carers.

Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer should complete the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 1), which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteers and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement. The school will seek DBS clearance for a volunteer before they are left unsupervised with any pupils. This is not required where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity or for volunteers in schools, for example, in specified places who are supervised at a reasonable level.

OUR SCHOOL CHRISTIAN VALUES:

As a school community we promote our values in all that we do:

- Compassion
- Thankfulness
- Forgiveness
- Peace
- Hope
- Respect

CONFIDENTIALITY

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality the same as for paid staff. Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with / come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child or any parents or persons outside school. Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Headteacher (Mrs C Hawkins).

SUPERVISION

All volunteers work under the supervision of a member of staff, Governing Body or the Friends of the School committee. Group leaders retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Where no teachers are involved the event, organisers are responsible. At all other times teachers retain responsibility.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out / what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice / guidance from the teacher in the event of any query / problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour. If you feel uncomfortable with what you have been asked to do please refer to the teacher or the Assistant Headteachers in the first instance.

DISCIPLINE

The School has a Good Behaviour Policy that any helpers will be expected to follow during their contact with the children. This can be borrowed from the school office if you wish to read it. The most important points of the policy reflect the underlying Christian ethos of the school. If you experience any difficulties please refer to the class teacher immediately.

Courtesy and consideration should be given to others at all times, to enable everyone in school to gain maximum benefit from the learning opportunities provided. Children are treated as individuals, within a community context, which seeks to provide a caring, nurturing and supportive environment for all those who work within it.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request to Volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks (e.g. using DT equipment / accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the Class Teacher/Assistant Headteachers / Headteacher.

Volunteers will be expected to read the risk assessment documents in the Volunteer pack and then sign the risk assessment record in the school office.

Volunteers who are pregnant or have a medical condition should inform the teacher they are working with, so that the Health and Safety leader may provide any necessary Risk Assessments for you.

CHILD PROTECTION

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All Volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Pack and asked to sign a Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 1)

It is the wish of the Governors and Staff that all matters concerning the children are kept within the school. This is essential to protect both children and parents from unnecessary worry or unfounded information being given out. If you hear or see anything that concerns you whilst in school please refer to the 'Dos & Don'ts' list below. Do not discuss your concerns with other parents or anyone else outside school. Whether suspicions arise through disclosures children make or as a result of observations, **you must** – even in cases where children appear not to be suffering at present make a written note, signed, dated and timed of what was said or seen and where.

For more information please refer to our Child Protection Policy.

ALWAYS refer the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) (Mrs C Hawkins), or in her absence, the deputy lead (DDSL) (Mrs Hothi)

DO:

- Always listen when a child tells you about abuse.
- Listen only to the information that the child wants to share and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately.
- If possible, write the exact words used by the child.
- Always speak and act in a reassuring way.
- Act immediately on any serious suspicion or allegation of abuse.
- Record what you have been told on a sheet of paper and date and sign it before giving it to the Headteacher.

DON'T:

- Do not ask probing questions. It is not your job to ask probing questions.
- Do not make promises you will not be able to keep eg “I will not tell anyone”.
- Do not under any circumstances, confront, question or inform the alleged abuser.
- Do not ask the child to repeat the story to anyone else.

ALWAYS refer the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs C Hawkins), or in her absence, the deputy DSL (Mrs Hothi)

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a Volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

PARENT HELPER AND VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

At High Wycombe Church of England Primary School

Volunteers are expected to:

- Be outstanding role models for all pupils.
- Work under the professional direction of staff, following school policies.
- Report any issues of concern to teachers (and not directly intervene).
- Allow the teachers to deal with discipline issues that arise.
- Speak in a kind and friendly way to all pupils.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Establish and maintain a rapport with pupils based on mutual respect.
- Contact the teacher if they are unable to attend.

Volunteers have the right to expect:

- Work to be prepared and the teacher organised.
- Good manners and acceptable behaviour from pupils.
- To be treated with respect.
- The teacher to deal with discipline issues that arise.
- Support from the teacher.
- Careful explanations of the tasks expected.
- To be notified if sessions are cancelled or the timetable changes.

As teacher, parents and community members, we expect:

- Our children to be respected.
- Our children to be safe and to feel secure.
- Our children to be protected from inappropriate behaviour and language.

APPENDIX 1

VOLUNTEER AGREEMENT

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at High Wycombe Church of England School.

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will gain much from your experience.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement and hand it in at school. You will receive a copy of it for your records.

- I have received and read a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy.
- I understand that if I have any concerns regarding safeguarding that I must refer the matter immediately to the DSL or the DDSL
- I have received and read a copy of the 'Child Protection advice for Volunteers' leaflet.
- I agree to support the School's Christian Values.
- I agree to treat information obtained from being a volunteer in school as strictly confidential.
- I understand that an enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Baring Service) check may be undertaken.
- I have been made aware of who is my designated supervisor e.g. Class Teacher.
- I have been made aware who the DSL is – Mrs C Hawkins (Headteacher) and DDSL IS Mrs Hothi

Name _____ **Signed:** _____

Date: _____

NB: Please return to the office