



Policy for volunteering at Harmondsworth Primary School

Introduction

At Harmondsworth Primary School we actively encourage parents, carers and other volunteers to be involved in enhancing the learning opportunities of children at our school. We recognise that they have skills and attributes that are valuable for learning and can support the school in raising standards and enhancing the learning experience.

Our Volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Working with groups of children in the food technology room
- Undertaking art and craft activities with children
- Running after-school clubs e.g. Netball
- Working with children on the computers
- Speaking in assemblies or running lunch and learn sessions
- Accompanying school visits

The following information explains the school procedure so that volunteers are able to support learning in a way that is consistent with school policy and practice.

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, approaches the class teacher directly.

Volunteers should read the policy and complete the Volunteer Agreement and return it to the school. The class teacher must ensure that all volunteers have



completed the Volunteer Agreement and have a clear DBS. All records are maintained by the school office.

Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we ask all volunteers to read the safeguarding policy (available in the school office or on the school website). In signing the Volunteer Agreement volunteers are agreeing to abide by this policy.

What to do if a child makes a disclosure.

- Allow them to speak freely
- Remain calm and do not over react – the child may stop talking if they feel they are upsetting you
- Give reassuring nods or words of comfort
- Do not be afraid of silences
- Under no circumstances ask investigative questions – such as how many times has this happened?
- At an appropriate time tell the child that in order to help them you must pass this information on
- Tell the child what will happen next. The child may agree to go with you to discuss the issue with their teacher or designated officer. Otherwise let them know that someone will come to see them by the end of the day.
- Report verbally to the class teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Write up your conversation as soon as possible on the record of concern form and hand it to the designated person.
- Seek support if you feel distressed

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our regular volunteers must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A certificate is issued to the individual to produce in school and the number of the disclosure recorded by the school.

Supervision



All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all time, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is to be carried out and what the expected outcome of the activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice or guidance from the teacher in the event of any query or problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

Health & Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available on request. Class teachers ensure that volunteers are clear about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (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.

If you hear an alarm:

A single **continuous tone** indicates a fire.

In case of this:

- Leave by the nearest exit
- Assemble in the infant / junior playground
- Do not re-enter the building until given the all clear by the Headteacher of Fire Brigade

If you discover a fire:

- Raise the alarm
- Leave by the nearest door
- Close all doors on route
- Assemble in the infant / junior playground

A **single intermittent tone** indicates lockdown, please remain in the classroom and follow staff's instructions. (See Lockdown policy)

Behaviour

The children address all members of staff by their surname. Volunteers are expected to be friendly and approachable but not over-familiar.



The school has a behaviour policy which provides guidance about the school code of conduct and ways of rewarding the managing behaviour. It is available on the school website.

Dress Code

Students on work experience and those on training programmes must abide by the staff dress code which does not permit casual clothes such as jeans at school. Volunteers are asked to dress appropriately for their time in school. All of the children wear school uniform. It is important that staff and volunteers provide a role model and come smartly dressed. Neat sports gear is encouraged on days when the class do PE. Plimsolls or trainers are obligatory for teaching or supporting a PE lesson for health and safety reasons. The dress code is more relaxed on non-uniform days.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school should regard any information that they acquire in working with children, whether personal information or information about progress and attainment, to be confidential and not to be discussed with anyone except the class teacher and teaching assistant.

Volunteers should not pass on information to a child's parents; if they have concerns or relevant information this should only be passed on to a member of staff.

Parent volunteers who are completing observation periods for training are assigned to classes different from those of their own children.

If volunteers are concerned about anything another adult in school says or does they should raise the matter with the designated safeguarding officer, Eleesa Dowding (DSO).

During playtimes, volunteers are welcome to enter the staff room and make a hot / cold drink.

Helping on School Visits

Our pupils' education is enriched through visits which give the children access to expertise and resources not normally available in school. We are fortunate to have many facilities in the local area and in London. School visits and journeys have clear links to the curriculum. They also include sporting fixtures, adventurous activities and recreational activities.

Teachers plan a variety of visits, wherever practical, free public transport is used so that costs are kept to a minimum. The school is reliant on voluntary



contributions to cover the costs of visits; sometimes visits have to be cancelled if there are insufficient voluntary contributions to fund the cost. No child is restricted from taking part through an inability to pay.

School visits and journeys are co-ordinated by the Admin Officer in the school office and overseen by the Headteacher. They ensure that all visits and journeys are well planned, with regard to the equal opportunities for inclusion of all pupils and health and safety requirements. Teachers complete risk assessments for all visits and journeys.

A member of the teaching staff is named as party leader. Supervision and staffing ratios follow the minimum recommended ratio and are set according to a variety of factors. The setting of supervision and staffing ratios is set by the party leader. The availability of additional volunteers is not always an advantage as it increases the size of the group and the teachers' overall responsibilities.

Recommended Minimum Ratio

- The recommended minimum ratio at year 4,5 and 6 is 1:15
- The recommended minimum ratio at year 1,2,3 is 1:6
- The recommended minimum ratio for the EYFS is 1:4
- During a school visit we prefer all volunteers to be DBS checked. Without a DBS check volunteers cannot be left in charge of a group and it is usually, therefore, impractical for parents without DBS checks to fulfil the responsibilities of a parent helper on visits.

The Role and Responsibilities of Parent/Volunteer Helps of Visits and Journeys

- The class teachers, in liaison with the Admin Officer, make most of the arrangements for visits, class teachers are responsible for the selection of parent volunteers.
- Parents are selected from a list of volunteers. The school retains the right not to invite a parent again.
- Those parents who have a DBS and have attended the annual volunteer meeting will be contacted to help first.

The main duties of parent/volunteer helpers on school visits are :-

- To ensure the safety and security of the children
- To engage with the children in order to enhance their learning experience



-
- To help ensure that all children participate fully and independently in all activities

Further guidelines

- Parents/volunteers are asked to read any briefing information which relates to the visit.
- Parents/volunteers should not leave their group/class at any time without notifying the teacher.
- Parents should not interfere with their own child's social interaction with their group and friends or their child's independence.
- Parents/volunteers who experience any difficulties with a child/children in their group should inform the class teacher as soon as possible.
- Parent/volunteers who are not DBS checked cannot take children to the toilets or take charge of a group.
- Visitors may only use their phones in the foyer or outside the building and should be challenged if seen using a camera inappropriately or photographing children.

- Parents who have not been invited as designated helpers on a visit cannot join the group without the prior agreement of the group leader. This would contravene the risk assessment which has been agreed for the visit.

- When walking in public places parents should encourage children to walk in twos rather than a group.

Complaints Procedure

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

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
- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class.



-
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.
The full Complaints Procedure is set out on the website.



Volunteer Agreement

As a volunteer I agree to:

- Use the school's behaviour guidelines and inform the teacher of any inappropriate behaviour
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Let staff know if I can't come in
- Respect the guidance of the teacher at all times
- Understand the need for DBS checks prior to working with children
- Complete a DBS application and share the certificate with the school
- Attend an annual volunteer meeting held at HPS

Agree not to:

- Look at or compare any child's work, records or teacher's notes
- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff or governors
- Speak negatively of any child as a result of things you may have seen them do or say in school
- Discuss information with other parents which you may have access to as a result of your position in school

I have read and agree to abide by this policy and have read the Safeguarding policy.

Signed..... Date.....

Name:.....