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VOLUNTEER POLICY			

Introduction

Paradise Primary School views volunteering as enriching and a value-added resource which brings mutual benefits to pupils, staff, parents, volunteers and the local community. Volunteers are also considered as being great assets for supporting classes whilst working towards their own goals of becoming accredited in teaching and learning. Volunteering provides useful work experience and skills to access better employment and training opportunities. Furthermore, it gives volunteers the chance to make a worthwhile contribution to the local community and support regeneration and social cohesion in the area.

We welcome volunteers and recognise that they can bring with them a range of skills and experience; and can make an invaluable and significant contribution to enhance learning opportunities and experiences, and raise achievements of pupils at our school.

Safeguarding


Our overriding concern is for the safety and security of the children in our care. Our school policy is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as necessary while being ensured of the best security possible. The welfare of our children is paramount. We are committed to safeguarding pupils, and expect all volunteers to share that commitment. To ensure the safety of our pupils always, all our Volunteers will be DBS cleared.

The Headteacher 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. The aims of the policy:

- To demonstrate our commitment to working with and supporting volunteers;
- To recognise the value-added contributions that volunteers make;
- To ensure good quality work experience and safe working practices for volunteers;
- To provide volunteers a framework with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in the School;
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion.

Our volunteers may include:

- Members of the Governing Body;
- Parents of pupils working alongside the teachers;
- Ex-pupils;
- Students on work experience;
- University students referred to us by Student Volunteer Services;
- Ex-members of staff;
- Residents;
- Friends of the school.

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The types of activities that volunteers engage in, on behalf of the school, may include:

- Classroom support;
- Listening to pupils whilst they read;
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning;
- Support for individual pupils;
- Help in developing the school library;
- Undertaking art & craft activities with children;
- Supporting after-school clubs;
- Helping with art or other practical subjects;
- Helping with supervision of children on school visits;
- Helping with classroom organisation;
- Helping with group work;
- General administration / Reception duties.

Volunteer helpers will not be allowed to do the following activities:

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class;
- Change very young children or supervise them changing;
- Supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities;
- Take the children off the school site without a teacher in charge.

The responsibility for the health and welfare of the children remains with the class teacher at all times.

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, should complete the Volunteer Application Form with their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.


Process for Recruiting Volunteers

- The school will review the application and identify if there is a need within the school for someone with the knowledge, skills and experience presented;
- An informal meeting/interview will be arranged to discuss the role and assess suitability for the role;
- Checks will be undertaken in line with our Safer Recruitment Policy before commencement.

Upon receiving a satisfactory DBS Disclosure, the volunteer will be invited to attend an induction programme whereby school policies, procedures and documentation will be explained and issued. All information pertaining to volunteers will be treated with confidentiality and volunteer records will be kept in a central place within the school.

Before starting to help in a school, a volunteer will complete the Volunteer Agreement form, which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteer and to confirm they have received a copy of this Agreement.

Our School Vision

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All Volunteers working in our school are expected to work and behave in an appropriate manner and to actively promote the aims, ethos and vision of the school.

Volunteers not requiring an Enhanced Disclosure

- Volunteers or parents who accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays;
- Those who help at specific events e.g. school fundraiser, etc. who do not have unsupervised access to children.

Signing in / out

- When any helper arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office and collect a volunteer badge which must be worn always in school. Please indicate the arrival time and which class you will be visiting;
- Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises.

Confidentiality


- Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Volunteers should maintain the confidentiality of all information which they are exposed to whilst volunteering at Paradise School;
- Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with/encounter should be voiced with the class teacher and **NOT** with the parents of the child/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 so that appropriate action can be taken;
- Volunteers who are concerned about anything in the school, which may affect their work, should raise the matter with the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff.

Parent Volunteers

It is the policy of the school to ask parents not to support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child and perhaps can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. Helpers will be asked to support in classes where there is the most need for individual support.

Supervision

- Volunteers should be supervised by a member of staff whom they are assigned to work with;
- Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for children always, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking;
- Volunteers should be given clear guidelines on how they are expected to help, and encouraged to ask for help and support from staff if queries or problems occur;
- Prior to starting their volunteering role, they should be given an induction which includes an introduction to their volunteering role and responsibilities and ensures that volunteers are aware of their agreed responsibilities and are provided with regular support.

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Health & Safety

Paradise Primary School has a duty to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, that volunteers are not exposed to unnecessary risks to their health and act safely whilst undertaking their role in school.

Paradise Primary School demonstrates the same responsibility for volunteers as that of paid employees. However, in the light of this, volunteers have a duty of care towards themselves and to others. Volunteers must abide by the Health and Safety policies of the school and failure to adhere to the Health and Safety policies could be construed as negligence.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher or appropriate senior member of staff, for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way.

The Head teacher 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;
- Based upon the facts identified in the investigation it may be necessary for the school to inform the volunteer that their voluntary position will be terminated.