

Wedmore First School Academy and Nursery



Volunteer Helpers in School Policy

Date: November 2015

Review Date: November 2018

Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery

Volunteer Helpers in School Policy

Vision

We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. We would like to encourage parents and other adults to help the school in a variety of ways. We believe that parents and carers can add enormous value to children's learning opportunities and experiences. 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.

Aims of Volunteer Helpers Policy

- To provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion.

Volunteer helpers are:

- Parents or other adults working alongside the teachers
- Students on work experience

Volunteer helpers support the school in a number of ways:

- Supporting individual pupils within classrooms
- Hearing pupils read – positive encouragement and support
- Helping with classroom organisation
- Helping with supervision of children on school visits
- Helping with group work
- Helping with art or other practical subjects (cooking etc)

Volunteer helpers are not allowed to do the following activities:

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class
- Change very young children or supervise them changing without a staff member present
- Take an individual child to the toilet;
- Supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities
- Take the children off the school site without a teacher in charge

The role of the helper is one of support to the class teacher. However, the teacher remains responsible for all pupils. While the teacher may delegate some authority to the helper, for example, within a group work situation, ultimate responsibility for the health and welfare of the children remains with the class teacher at all times lies with the

teacher at all times. We expect children to behave with the same respect and politeness to any visitors/helpers in the school, as they would staff members.

Signing in

When helpers arrive in the school, they must sign in at the office. They will be issued a visitor's badge, which they should wear at all times. They must also sign out and return their badge before they leave.

Safeguarding checks

For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have clearance through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before they work in the school.

Occasionally, the head teacher may decide that a volunteer can begin to help in school after they have submitted their DBS forms for clearance via the school office but only in a supervised capacity – under no circumstances are they left alone with a child.

We now also ask that a Disqualification by Association (DBA) declaration form be completed prior to starting to help in school. In the event of an issue arising from the declaration, the decision whether to allow that person to volunteer in school lies with the Headteacher following a risk assessment taking place.

The head teacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes it will not be in the best interests of the children.

Volunteers not requiring a DBS clearance or DBA declaration

Volunteers or parents who accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays. Any such volunteer must not have sole charge of a group of children.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fete, mums in school days etc who do not have unsupervised access to children.

Confidentiality

We recognise that for staff and parents of other children to be confident about helpers in school all volunteers will need to agree to a protocol about confidentiality and conduct. Volunteer helpers are asked to sign a 'Volunteer Helpers Protocol,' a copy of which will be kept in school.

It is essential that all helpers appreciate and support the necessity for confidentiality. It is of extreme importance that everyone working within the school adheres to strict standards of confidentiality – what you see or in hear in school should remain within the confines of the school. Confidentiality and discretion are very important. Volunteers should not discuss a child's work or behaviour with the child's parents or anyone outside the school.

However, we ask if you see or hear anything of a sensitive nature (from or about any child) which causes you concern, please discuss it with the teacher or head teacher before you leave. Jackie Hipwell is our lead Child Protection Officer.

Volunteer helpers are very welcome to join the staff for tea or coffee in the staffroom but are asked again to respect confidentiality regarding conversations in that environment.

These guidelines are to ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of all concerned.

Deployment of classroom helpers

Parent helpers often assist in their own child's classroom. In the event of this proving distracting for the child, helpers will be asked to assist in another class in which there is need for additional support. Volunteers who are gaining necessary experience as part of a professional course are usually deployed to other classrooms.

Adults help in school throughout the school day. They could be asked to help with a range of activities and tasks in and out of the classroom, depending on their preferences and skills. Arrangements are made for volunteers, who are unable to come into school, but offer to take tasks home. Class volunteers might stay with the same class teacher or move with the class in successive years.

A help sheet is given to volunteers when they begin to help in school explaining what is expected of them and giving simple guidelines. Extra training for volunteers in school may be provided if and when available.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if considered necessary.

Approved by the Governing Body:

Signed by Chair:

Date:



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Volunteer Helpers in School Protocol

Please read and sign the document below to confirm your agreement with the following school expectations as a volunteer helper:

As a school we agree to:

- Explain your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children
- Share the school behaviour and ethos policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour
- Encourage the children you support to behave and work well
- Treat you with respect and care
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with
- Let you know in advance the overall plan for the activity/day and let you know if this changes!
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality

Signed:.....(Member of staff) Date:

Volunteer Helper: (Printed Name)

As a volunteer helper I agree to:

- Use the school behaviour and ethos policy and inform the teacher if I see any inappropriate behaviour
- Inform the teacher if I observe anything that concerns me in school
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if I am unable to come into school for any reason
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the teacher at all times
- Complete the appropriate DBS safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations to the Headteacher prior to starting as a volunteer helper at Wedmore First School Academy and Nursery

I agree not to:

- Look at or compare children's work, records or staff records
- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team

Signed:..... Date:



Guidance for Volunteer Helpers in School

Welcome

At Wedmore First School Academy & Nursery we encourage parental involvement in the school. We also aim to be welcoming to the local community and benefit from the many and varied skills that individuals can offer. Thank you for offering your time and expertise. It is always greatly appreciated that you give up your time and come into school to assist the staff and children.

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved we have drawn up the following guidelines:

Do:

- Sign in and collect a visitor's badge when you arrive at school. Sign out and return badge when leaving;
- Ensure you are familiar with the Fire Safety Procedures (notice next to signing in book)
- Ensure you are aware of basic guidance regarding Safeguarding and Confidentiality issues and adhere to them;
- Notify the school if you are unable to help out on any occasion so that the class teacher can adapt his/her planning accordingly;
- Be sure you are clear as to your role and that you have discussed the activities to be carried out with a teacher;
- Work at the children's level – both in conversation and in physical size;
- Discuss the task in hand and keep the children focused;
- Encourage children to adhere to the 'Pupil Promise' and class rules;
- Direct a child to the teacher or classroom assistant if you are unsure of something;
- Encourage independence, use open ended questions such as, "What do you think you should do next?" or "Why do you think that happened?"
- Encourage children to work quietly, reinforce this by using a quiet voice yourself;
- Encourage children to move quietly and calmly within the school without running;

Don't:

- Accompany children to the toilet;
- Help a child change their clothes whilst alone with them;
- Hold on to or strike a child;
- Reprimand a child verbally or physically – if you are unhappy about a child's behaviour, alert the teacher;
- Share information seen or heard within school with others outside of school;

If at any time you are uncertain as to what is expected of you or how to deal with a child or situation, do not hesitate to approach a member of staff immediately.

