



The Meadows

Primary School

‘Learning by Caring and Sharing’

Volunteer Policy



The school's Volunteer policy is part of the school's safeguarding systems. It must be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding policy, Health and Safety, Online Safety, Mobile Phone and Data Protection policies. Other policies may apply depending on the nature of the volunteering.

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. We therefore welcome and encourage volunteers from the community.

Our volunteers may include:

- Parents of pupils
- Students on work experience
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The recruitment of new volunteers can take up to half a term and intake of new volunteers will be dependent on the candidate and available spaces within school. The smooth running of The Meadows School will always be a priority. The Headteacher maintains the right to decline volunteers and also terminate placements.

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

- Hearing pupils read
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning
- Accompanying school visits

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 pupils read, usually approaches the Class Teacher, Head Teacher or Office Manager directly.

Volunteers should complete the Volunteer Application Form (appendix 1) with a covering letter requesting interest. This requests their contact details, types of activities they would like to help with, and the times they are available to help.

Child Protection and Safeguarding

Safeguarding is our priority and we follow the safer recruitment guidelines to ensure that we are committed to safeguarding pupils, young people and vulnerable adults and expects its volunteers to share that commitment. The process of recruitment of volunteers mirrors the safer recruitment of paid staff to ensure the most suitable adults for our school. A list of volunteers will be kept in the main admin office- this will be kept up to date and is the responsibility of the Office Manager.

To ensure the safety of our pupils, we adopt the following procedures:

- All volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy and asked to sign a *Volunteer Agreement* (Appendix 2)
- All of our frequent volunteers must have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). A DBS Disclosure will be issued to the individual to present to the designated member of staff in school.
- Two references should be sought where the volunteer arrangement will continue on a regular basis.
- Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one off' activity e.g. sharing their skills/knowledge by talking to the class, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. These volunteers will be under constant supervision of school staff and at no point unsupervised or alone with children.

On-line Safety

Online Safety relates to the teaching and learning of technology and through technology in a responsible and safe environment, focusing on raising awareness of the core messages of safe content, contact and conduct when using it. Volunteers, like staff are expected to follow the Online Safety Policy which is available from the main office or the school website.

Mobile Devices

All volunteers, visitors, members of the Academy Council and contractors are expected to follow our mobile phone policy as it relates to staff whilst on the premises. Volunteers are not permitted to make/receive calls/texts during contact time with children. Emergency contact should be made via the school office.

If phones are brought onto the school premises, volunteers are requested to turn off their phones and hand them in to the school office. They can be collected when they sign out. The Mobile Phone Policy is available from the school office or on the school website.

Volunteers for school visits

School visits are an integral part of learning at our school and afford many pupils opportunities which are outside their usual experiences. The class teacher or staff member leading the visit will brief the volunteer regarding the risk assessment, daily schedule and any other important pieces of information. The visit lead, who will be a staff member, has ultimate responsibility for the pupils. Pupils should never be left with a volunteer unsupervised.

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, who will be under the constant supervision of school staff, must read and sign our Off-Site Visit Agreement (Appendix 3).

Work Experience/ Placement Students

The Meadows has a long-standing relationship with various local secondary schools, colleges and

universities. We are happy to take students on placement if we have suitable experiences available based on the smooth running of the school. Secondary schools, colleges and universities wanting students to be placed with us need to formally make contact with the Head Teacher.

If the placement is as part of a teaching course the Head Teacher will deal with further correspondents/details. If the placement is just for work experiences purposes the school/ college is asked to provide the reference for the student and the student is requested to complete the volunteer's paperwork.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with/come into contact with, should be voiced with the designated supervisor and NOT with the parents of the child/persons.

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. Any information gained at the school about a child or adult should remain confidential.

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 or child in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Head teacher or the Class Teacher.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the pupils understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from their designated supervisor.

A code of conduct is promoted with the aim of creating a cooperative workforce, where staff and volunteers work as a team, have high values and respect each other; thus creating a strong morale and sense of commitment leading to increased productivity.

Health and Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available 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. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the designated Supervisor. Volunteers are covered by the school's Health & Safety Statement and indemnity and Public Liability Insurance.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer the person concerned must follow the school's complaints policy which is found on the school website.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the Academy Council and will be regularly reviewed and updated.

Reviewed	July 2023
Document Owner	E. Kuffour
Approved By	G. Taylor
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