

St John's C of E Infant School

Policy for Volunteers in School

Agreed by Staff:	February 2023
Agreed by Governors:	February 2023
Next Review:	February 2024

St John's C of E Infant School highly values parents and others who volunteer to help out with school activities. We are committed to parent partnership and want to include and incorporate parents in all areas of school life. We especially value help with leading small groups, working with readers, supporting with school trips and help in the lunch hall.

It is our duty to ensure that whilst individuals are engaged in voluntary activities for the school that we care for them and ensure their safety. We also, of course, have a duty to ensure that our pupils' welfare is promoted, they are cared for appropriately and they are safeguarded from any harm. Therefore there are certain measures we need to apply to ensure that all volunteers and pupils are safe and cared for.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks

We have a responsibility to ensure that all adults working for the school are suitable people to work with children. The Department of Education and the Local Authority set out guidance regarding when adults working on behalf of the school must be subject to these checks. This means that depending on the nature and regularity of help, also the level contact with children, we will need to ask permission for a DBS check.

This check is to ensure that volunteers are not included on the Independent Safeguarding Authority list of those people who have been barred from working with children, do not have relevant convictions, and the police do not have any other information about a volunteer which suggests that they may be unsuitable to work with children.

We wish to assure volunteers that this information is solely for the purpose of ensuring that our pupils are safe from unsuitable people. We can further assure them that this information will be kept confidential to those who 'need to know' (usually the Headteacher and the Local Authority) and securely stored. If an individual does have convictions this does not mean that they will be considered unsuitable; usually this would only apply if a person has convictions for offences against children, sex offences or offences of serious violence.

No checks will be undertaken without the volunteer's agreement and they will receive a copy of the check. When regular volunteers come into school they will be issued with a named lanyard which must be given in at the end of their session.

Welfare and Safety of Volunteers and Children

We undertake to ensure that any activities which volunteers are involved with are planned properly and safely. We further undertake to ensure that at all times they will have access to a member of staff should any emergencies arise or they need to talk to someone immediately regarding any difficulties.

Code of Safe Conduct

It is essential that we acknowledge that the vast majority of volunteers behave appropriately whilst working with our pupils. However, expected conduct of adults working in school is sometimes different from that which applies whilst caring for their own children. Conduct is also governed by certain laws and government guidance. The school has therefore produced a 'Guidelines for Volunteers' document (attached below) and adherence to the guidelines should ensure that both adults and children are safe, including the possibility of allegations being made against them.



Guidelines for Volunteers in St John's C of E Infant School

Thank you very much for offering to volunteer in our school. We really appreciate your involvement with and commitment to St John's. In any organisation there needs to be a consistent approach and here are some guidelines to help you. Please read them and complete the agreement slip at the end.

General Arrangements:

- You will have agreed a mutually convenient time to help in school. If you are unable to help at the arranged time, please let us know as soon as possible. Likewise, we will try to inform you if your help is not needed on any day.

Health and Safety:

Your safety and wellbeing during your visit are important to us, as is the health and safety of our children.

- Please remember to sign in and out at the school office, pick up and wear your named lanyard, returning it to the office when you sign out. We need to know who is in school for fire, security and evacuation procedures.
- Please do not leave pupils unsupervised.
- Any pupils requiring medical assistance should be referred immediately to the teaching or office staff.
- If you are working with a group of children in school and you hear the fire alarm, please escort the children silently and quickly in single file out of the nearest fire exit. Do not stop to pick up any possessions or equipment. You should assemble on the Rabbits Class playground where the children should re-join their class for the register to be called. Do not re-enter the building until officially told to do so. If you need assistance to leave the building, please inform the office staff on arrival. It is essential that we can account for all adults and children on the premises.
- There are two staff toilets, located in the middle of the corridor which are available for your use.
- Please ask the member of staff with whom you are working where your coat / bag may be kept. Schools are public places and care must be taken to secure valuables. Unfortunately, the school cannot accept responsibility for any loss, although we hope the situation will not arise.
- Please let a member of staff know if you find anything faulty or in need of repair, as it could endanger those in the school.
- Please do not bring siblings to school when you are helping.
- Please do not undertake any work with children if you are not in a fit and proper or emotional state to do so. For example, under the influence of drugs or alcohol or medication which induces drowsiness or that dictates that you should not be caring for children, or under extreme stress which is likely to impair your judgement.

Child Protection and Safeguarding:

This is fundamental to everything that we do at St John's and we take our responsibilities very seriously. We all have a responsibility for safeguarding the pupils and the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) are:

- Marion Stevens, Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Sophie Ireland, SENCO / Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- To keep our pupils safe, you will have already completed a Disclosure and Barring Check before you began volunteering.
- You must treat all children equally, never confer favour on particular children, or build "special relationships" with individual children.
- Please ensure that all physical contact with children is kept to a minimum.
- When working with children, remain in a clearly visible area.
- Mobile phones – must be stored at the office when you are on site working with children.
- Photography – no photographs or videos may be taken.
- Children may tell you things if you have concerns about what you have been told, listen, take it seriously, but **do not** ask leading questions, **do not promise to keep it a secret.**

Reassure the child that it is good to speak with someone when you have a worry.

You must then report it immediately, discreetly to a member of staff or DSL.

- If you see anything that gives you cause for concern, please speak to the head teacher / DSL or a member of staff as soon as possible. Do not undertake your own investigation and in particular do not speak to the children about your concerns. If your concerns are with regard to the head teacher please contact the chair of governors.
- Our Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy is available on the school website, or available on request from the school office.

Working Alongside Staff and Children

- Please remember that you are an important role model and that we have high expectations of the children regarding behaviour and good manners promoting an ethos of mutual respect.
- Please adhere closely to instructions given by staff as this will be most beneficial to all.
- The member of staff you are helping will discuss with you how best to use your time in school, eg, hearing readers, repairing books, supporting a group of children, etc.
- If you don't understand anything, please ask. If you don't know where something is, please ask.
- If you are working with a group of children, please remember they need time to consider their responses and every member of the group should have an opportunity to contribute. They should be encouraged to attempt to do things for themselves and should be praised for their efforts.
- It is important to the management of the class that any equipment used is cleared away at the end of the session. Please involve the children in this activity.
- Children cannot always identify their own work and possessions. Please ensure that names are put on work where appropriate.

Confidentiality

- **Confidentiality is very important** and any observations you have regarding individual children should always be directed to the class teacher and not discussed with the children's parents or other members of the school community.
- Details of children's progress and attainment should not be discussed with anyone outside of school, including the child's parents.



Guidelines for Volunteers in St John's C of E Infant School

Thank you for your help and taking the time to read this document. We hope it will lead to a very happy partnership and that you will find your time in school rewarding, stimulating and an enjoyable experience.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'M Stevens'.

Marion Stevens
Headteacher

I have read and agree with these guidelines and understand that during my time in school I will be in a position of trust and responsibility and that discretion and confidentiality are essential. I will not discuss individuals or events which could discredit the staff, children or parents of the school.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Please return this page to the school office.