

# Stratford Rural Schools' Federation



## FEDERATION POLICY FOR THE USE OF VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL

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### Related Policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Confidentiality
- Work Experience
- Health & Safety Induction

**We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

## Introduction

The schools in the federation welcome and encourage volunteers; we accept that they bring with them a range of skills and experiences that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at our schools. We recognise that parents and other members of the community have many skills which can be deployed in a school on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the children's education. Volunteer helpers in the classroom, on trips and for extra-curricular activities are a great asset in helping teachers to offer a broader and more differentiated curriculum.

Community volunteers can be:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents and carers of our pupils
- Local residents
- Ex members of staff
- Work experience students (usually Year 11 or 12)

**All adults who work or volunteer in school are expected to work and behave in such a way as to actively promote our school core aims and values, whether they are a paid member of staff or volunteer.**

## Aims

Schools have the responsibility to manage their volunteers well. When a person volunteers to help in our schools we must be able to support that person to equip them properly for the tasks we ask of them. They must be given clear instructions in order to show that we value their support, but also in order to make the best use of their time. Class teachers retain responsibility for their class at all times.

Volunteers in school can:

- Enrich the educational experiences of the children
- Promote the partnership between school, home and the local community
- Demonstrate that learning is a lifelong process
- Enable children to have more time with an adult in the classroom, thereby enhancing their learning
- Release teachers from some tasks, enabling them to spend more time engaged with children.

## Applying to be a Volunteer

### Procedure

- Complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 1).
- Return to the school.
- The Head of School will ask you to apply for a DBS check (see Child Protection and Safeguarding section below).

- Once your DBS is returned and is clear, you will be asked into school to discuss the details and give you some general information about what is required. You will be asked to sign the school's Confidentiality Agreement and then a start date will be agreed.

## **The Role of a Volunteer**

Typical tasks we may ask of volunteers:

- Supporting individual pupils
- Listening to children read
- Helping to supervise on school trips/sports events
- Helping with art or practical activities
- Preparing materials for lessons
- Administrative support

Volunteers should follow class conventions and rules. They should treat everyone in the class in the same way, even their own children.

Volunteers should not use mobile phones whilst in school.

### **The Head of School reserves the right to take the following actions:**

To speak with a volunteer who has breached this policy or other agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again.

Offer the volunteer an alternative placement in another class.

Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

### **Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure**

All volunteer helpers at our schools are required to complete a criminal disclosure (called a DBS check). DBS applications are submitted online and the method of application will be advised when a person applies to become a volunteer. Unfortunately we cannot accept anyone as a helper in school until we have received a clear DBS check.

### **Child Protection**

Volunteers will appreciate the need for all adults in school to be aware of child protection procedures. Any issues about a child's welfare and safety that volunteers are concerned about should be referred to the class teacher or the Head of School. All our schools have 2 trained Designated Safeguarding Leads that volunteers can also talk to in confidence.

Loxley – Mr Watson, Head of School. Mrs Hull, Teaching Assistant.

Snitterfield –Mrs Norris, Class teacher.

Wilmcote – Mrs Banyard, Head of School.

Occasionally children may feel that they can trust a volunteer enough to disclose personal information of a concerning nature. Some children are more likely to disclose to a relatively unknown person. If this happens, volunteers should explain to the child that they have to share this information with a member of staff. Please report any disclosure to the class teacher or the DSLs identified above.

## **Confidentiality**

The federation has a Confidentiality Policy and a Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix 2) that all staff and volunteers are required to sign. Volunteers are bound by this code of confidentiality. It is vital that volunteers do not share anything about specific children with anyone else. It is a teacher's role to inform parents about any concerns.

Volunteers working in classrooms or on trips should do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles.

Any conversation with parents outside the school is a breach of the school's Confidentiality Agreement. Even quite innocent comments could be misunderstood by other parents. It is therefore important to treat anything seen or heard in school as being in absolute confidence and entirely a matter for the school. Unfortunately we would have to ask a volunteer to step down if this policy is breached.

## **Health and Safety**

### **Arrival at School**

All volunteers are expected to report to the main school office on arrival and sign in. This will allow the office staff to locate people visiting the site in the event of an emergency. They should collect a visitor's badge as this will identify the volunteer as an 'official visitor'. On leaving the site it is essential that all visitors sign out and hand back their badge.

### **Fire Procedures**

In the event of a fire or another emergency evacuation a bell will ring continuously. Please follow the children and staff to the designated fire assembly point. Fire escapes routes are also displayed clearly around school. Office staff will check all visitors against the visitor's book.

### **First Aid and Medical issues**

All our schools have a number of First Aid trained staff. Should a child need first aid they should be directed to their class teacher in the first instance who will arrange treatment. Should a volunteer need first aid they should follow the same procedure.

Some of our children have medical issues that volunteers may need to be aware of. Class teachers will give you any details on a 'need to know' basis. Please see the section on confidentiality.

In case a volunteer has a medical issue whilst on school property, we do ask that volunteers supply the school with an emergency contact. See Volunteer application form (Appendix 1)

## Useful Guidelines for Volunteers

- Always treat pupils with respect and as you would expect them to treat you.
- Be friendly towards children but do not encourage physical affection, for example hugging. Please do not initiate physical contact. Avoid being alone with a child.
- Avoid raising your voice to the pupils. Speaking in a normal voice encourages them to listen harder to hear you.
- Don't be afraid to calmly and quietly correct a child who is misbehaving but never handle a child. If in doubt refer to a member of staff.
- Praise the children for their effort as much as possible.
- Don't let pupils become over family or cheeky, even if they know you out of school. They should be learning how to behave socially towards adults. Insist that they use your surname.
- Please don't do the children's work for them. We are encouraging all our children to become independent learners.
- If listening to a child read, please try to ask the child some questions about the text. You could ask what's gone on before in the story, about the characters, what they think might happen.
- Do not contact children outside of school through any form of social media, texting, email etc.
- Do not arrange to meet up with children outside school hours.

**APPENDIX 1:** Volunteer Application Form

**APPENDIX 2:** Confidentiality Agreement

## APPENDIX 1: Volunteer Application Form

Please complete and return to school if you like to become a volunteer in school.

PERSONAL DETAILS			
<b>Name</b>			
<b>Address</b>			
<b>Telephone Number</b>			
<b>Email</b>			
<b>Emergency Contact details</b>			
<b>Do you have any disabilities/other needs that we need to take into account when you are working as a volunteer?</b>			
AVAILABILITY			
<b>Days available (Please tick)</b>		AM	PM
	Monday		
	Tuesday		
	Wednesday		
	Thursday		
	Friday		
<b>What areas would you like to help with in school?</b>	Reading/Art/Science/Trips/Gardening/Cooking etc		
<b>Which age groups would you like to work with? (Please tick)</b>	Infants – age 4 to 7		
	Lower Juniors – age 7-9		
	Upper Juniors – age 9-11		

Please return this form to the school office and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

<b>NAME</b>		
<b>SCHOOL</b>		
<b>ROLE</b>		
<p>All members of staff, regular visitors, Governors and volunteers are required to sign the following statement relating to confidentiality.</p>		
<p>I have read and understood the Confidentiality Policy and agree to adhere to this in my role at ..... School during my time at the school and after I have left.</p>		<b>PLEASE TICK</b>
<p>I recognise that I am in a position whereby, at certain times, I may have access to information concerning individual children, staff and parents/carers.</p>		
<p>I agree to only discuss information relating to .....School and respective stakeholders on a 'need to know' basis, as defined in the policy.</p>		
<p>I agree not to post or share information online through any means, including all areas of social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter), which relates to any individual stakeholder or brings ..... School into disrepute.</p>		
<p>I agree to refer all requests for information by an outside agency or the media to the Head of School or Executive Headteacher.</p>		
<b>SIGNED</b>		
<b>DATE</b>		