

VOLUNTEERS POLICY

Introduction

The role of volunteers in our school provides for the enrichment of the Student's learning experiences but should not encroach on or restrict professional teaching duties. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, is managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of the Students and the staff to whom they are assigned.

At our school the Headteacher and Governors are mindful of deploying volunteers appropriately. Volunteers are not asked to replace paid staff or given responsibility within the School that would normally be associated with paid employees.

Deployment

Volunteers are not asked to carry out duties which:-

- fall normally within a Teacher's responsibility under loco parentis;
- fall normally within the job description of a Teacher or member of support staff, ie they are not asked to cover the absence of staff from School;
- would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the LA or by the School;
- require them to have unsupervised access to children on a 1:1 basis;
- the Teacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work.

Organisation

During a visit to the school each volunteer is linked with a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer, it is expected that time is taken to ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role and that there is mutual agreement and understanding. This additional responsibility is not compulsory for staff but will only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned.

All volunteers are made to feel welcome. The parameters of their role within the school are clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding.

School Regulations and Other Information

In fairness to all concerned, volunteers are made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the School; the Behaviour Policy. This includes procedures designed to avoid hazards or risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and importantly, details of first aid and emergency arrangements such as procedures to follow in case of fire.

As part of their induction to life at the school, volunteers are also provided with basic information such as details of those facilities available to them eg staff room, toilets etc.

We feel that it is vital that volunteers are made aware of the following procedures:-

- expectations with regard to confidentiality;
- access to information related to Student's and/or Staff;
- expected level of behaviour and an awareness of Professional Codes of Conduct;
- School's Equal Opportunities policy – especially focussing on issues relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language;
- the School's Complaints procedure;
- the School's Disciplinary procedure.

Child Protection

The law requires the school to receive an enhanced DBS disclosure check for anyone with responsibilities which can give them regular unsupervised access to Students under the age of 19. Under the Education (Teachers Amendment) Regulation 1998 this now includes volunteers who regularly help:-

- in the classroom;
- in extra curricular activities;
- supervise Students on school organised holidays or residential visits.

Volunteers that also have:-

- ongoing;
- substantial;
- unsupervised access also fall under this category. All volunteers falling within the above categories are asked to complete a Protection of Children Form (PO39) and a Police check will be carried out.

IMPORTANT: It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children.

The Headteacher will take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. The administrator will view, and take a copy of at least two original documents, as part of the checking process:-

- Birth Certificate plus if the name has changed:
- Marriage Certificate
- Passport;
- Driver's Licence.

These regulations do not apply to volunteers such as those who may assist the school activities on an irregular or adhoc basis but do apply to volunteers that drive children in cars or minibuses on a regular basis.

Insurance

Volunteers are informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering for the school they are covered by the School insurance arrangements.

Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events, (sport, music etc) are made aware of the school policy and advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their insurance policy conditions.

The school carefully considers all aspects of insurance and safety before deploying volunteers to drive a school minibus. All parties will be made fully aware of the regulations and drivers will be offered appropriate training and instruction before taking children on journeys in vehicles owned or hired by the school.

Allowances

Although there is no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers; out-of-pocket expenses are available, connected with the tasks they undertake for the school, reimbursed through the school fund, if requested.

State benefits claimed by volunteers can be affected by voluntary work and as such volunteers are advised to refer to Form FB26 available from the local Benefits Office if they are in any doubt about work they may undertake voluntarily. The main points for consideration are that volunteers should remain available for work if claiming unemployment benefits and that disabled volunteers should not undertake voluntary work of a nature similar to that for which they are receiving disability benefit.

1. This policy has been adopted by the Governing Body April 2015