



Sacred Heart Primary School

Volunteer Helpers' Policy

This policy was reviewed:	Autumn 2020
This policy will be reviewed again:	Summer 2022
Governor Committee Responsibility:	BAPD Committee
Statutory policy	No
Source:	Headteacher



Volunteer Helpers' Policy

Rationale

There are several important areas in the education of children where parents and volunteer helpers can be positively involved and children derive numerous benefits from such a partnership.

At Sacred Heart School, we recognise that parents and volunteer helpers are an important part of the school community and we seek to encourage strong links between school and home. We welcome and appreciate the efforts of our volunteers. Should a parent wish volunteer to support in school, it is essential that both the teacher and parent are clear what will be expected of them.

Sacred Heart is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Regular adult helpers must undergo an enhanced DSB check in accordance with the LEA guidance. This check is carried out electronically in school.

Volunteer Helpers must also read and sign that they have understood the following policies:

- Volunteer Helpers' Policy
- Behaviour For Learning Policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (Part 1)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures
- Confidentiality Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- SEND Policy
- Equalities Statement
- Anti-Bullying Policy

Additionally, Helpers should be able to identify the Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in the school.

Benefits for the child

1. Parents are recognised as playing an important role in the educational process
2. With more positive attitudes towards school, a child is less likely to perceive conflict between home and school especially if parent and teacher are seen to be working toward the same ends.
3. Enrichment of the child's education because of: a) the freeing of teachers and Teaching Assistants to concentrate on the central task of education b) dimensions may be added by parents or other adults for example where they have specific skills and knowledge that can enhance the curriculum being taught.



Benefits for the parent

1. Recognising that education is part of a lifelong process for themselves and their children.
2. The recognition of their own contribution to local children's learning and the satisfaction of taking an active role in supporting the school, the teaching profession and the education system.
3. An understanding of and empathy for the aims and teaching methods of the school through better understanding.

Benefits for the teacher

1. Information about the locality and the community
2. Good working relationship between staff and parents
3. Acknowledging that education is part of a lifelong process for everyone.

Parental Help at Sacred Heart School

Adults are warmly welcomed to help in school at mutually agreed times. Whilst we appreciate help of a regular nature, there are some tasks or special projects which can also be carried out at home, which are of equal benefit to the staff and children.

Adults helping in school will initially meet with the Deputy Head teacher who will allocate and explain tasks required, the volunteers will then work under the direct supervision of the class teacher. Regular helpers rapidly learn individual practices, but policy documents are available to give a deeper understanding of our methods and ideas.

Parent helpers should be aware that their presence in the school can sometimes cause adverse reactions from their child. To minimise this the school does not deploy regular volunteers in classrooms with their child.

Regular in class support

1. The main task our volunteers undertake is the regular changing of reading books for use at home. We recognise the vital role volunteers play in ensuring children maintain the momentum of reading at home. If there is any reason volunteers cannot come in on an agreed day, we request them to inform the class teacher or the office so alternative arrangements can be made where possible.
2. Preparation of materials and other support some teachers need help and support with photocopying, laminating etc. These tasks are usually completed outside of the classroom so as not to disturb children.
3. Curricular and extracurricular activities for children. Teachers may invite parents into school to contribute to various aspects of the curriculum. Classes may require an extra pair of hands for example during art and craft, science or technology.
4. A parent with specialist knowledge or experience that may be invited in to enhance the children's learning connected with their area of expertise.
5. We also encourage parents to enlist help from the wider community in order for our children to have the best possible provision for their learning.



6. Sometimes we will ask for a volunteer to complete a specific one off job via the regular newsletters.
7. Supervision of children on educational or social excursions. Parents may be asked to assist school staff in the supervision of pupils on outings organised as part of the school's educational provision.

Confidentiality

Volunteer helpers are required to undergo an Induction process, part of which involves the signing of the school's confidentiality policy.

Adult helpers and visitors are welcomed into the staffroom to make drinks, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed here and to exercise discretion.

We require confidentiality be maintained in respect of the children's attainments, attitudes and behaviour at all times.

The school leadership reserves the right to choose which parents work in school and how they are deployed.

Any matter that is of concern should be discussed immediately with the class teacher, deputy head or head teacher as appropriate in order for any misunderstandings to be addressed.

Safeguarding

All parents who help in school on a regular basis are required to read our safeguarding policies and are asked to sign once they have done so.

No volunteers will be allowed to work regularly in school without the satisfactory completion of an enhanced DBS.

All concerns about a child should be referred to the Child Protection Officer or the head teacher in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy.

Where volunteers come forward from the wider community, we reserve the right to take up references in order to be check the suitability of the placement.

Health and Safety

Health and Safety requires us to know exactly who is on the school premises and where they are.

We therefore ask that every adult who comes into the school to enter via the main reception door.

Every visitor to the school site must sign in and collect their visitors' sticker.

For our volunteers own protection/safety we ask that they do not enter the classroom unless the class teacher is present.

Volunteers will be directed to read the fire drill procedures notices which are by each classroom door.



Conclusion

We greatly appreciate the extra support provided by adult helpers.

It is important that helpers feel welcome and valued.

Should a parent helper have any concerns that this may not be the case, we welcome any feedback which may assist us to improve arrangements for the future.

This policy was reviewed in October 2020.



Guidelines for Parent helpers in the classroom

Thank you for volunteering to help in school your support is valued very highly.

The following guidelines are intended to support and to help volunteers feel comfortable and informed of expectations.

- Arrange your time in the classroom with the teacher in advance – it is helpful if you can also agree what you feel able to help with (there are lots of different ways we can use your expertise). If you are unsure what you have been asked to do, please check immediately – either with the teacher or the teaching assistant.
- You should never be left in the classroom with the children on your own. ☐ Children will sometimes “push the boundaries” when with a helping parent. If a little reminder does not elicit an immediate improvement, please refer to the teacher.
- No adult in school is permitted to remove/insert earrings.
- Whilst you are in the classroom you will sometimes see children being disciplined. However sorry you feel for them, please do not give them any comfort or support. You will not always be aware of what has happened previously, or the warnings that have been given and may undermine the authority of the teacher.
- We have well defined procedures for informing parents of what has happened whilst the children are in school and we will be the first to discuss any issues where we have concerns. Never be tempted to relay anything you have seen or heard in a classroom to other parents, we need to be assured that all volunteers will exercise total discretion in all respects when helping in school.
- If you have any concerns at any time about the way a child has been treated, or any aspect of classroom practice, please raise the issue immediately with the headteacher.
- Remember that your presence in the school may well affect your child's behaviour in all sorts of ways. Prepare your child by explaining in advance that you will be in the school to help.
- Helping in the classroom means that you may be privy to confidential information. Please exercise the utmost discretion in all respects.

Helpers are required to sign that they have read and understand the contents of the following policies, which are available on the school's web site:-

Volunteers Helpers Policy, KCSIE (Part 1), Child Protection/Safeguarding Procedures, Health and Safety Policy, SEND Policy, Equalities Statement, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Confidentiality Policy.

I have read, understood and will comply with the listed policies.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____ (Print)