

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Volunteer Helpers Policy

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus
as we learn, love and grow together"*

Document Date: Summer 2018
Review Date: Summer 2019
Reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'John' followed by a long horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 15th May 2018

Volunteer Helpers in School Policy

Context and Vision

St Vincent de Paul School forms an open and welcoming Catholic community. We encourage parents and other adults to help the school in a variety of ways and greatly appreciate the contribution they make. We believe that parents and carers can add enormous value to children's learning opportunities and experiences.

However, our overriding concern is the safety and security of the children in our care. Our school policy is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as necessary, whilst remaining safe. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding policy.

1. Aims of Volunteer Helpers Policy

- To provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations and guidelines for volunteering in school
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning, to raise standards of achievement and to promote community links.

2. Volunteer helpers are:

- Parents or other adults carrying out tasks.
- Secondary school students on work experience.
- University students/graduates on placement.
- School governors (see separate Governor Visits policy)

In every instance the contribution of the volunteer will be determined, directed, supervised and evaluated by the class teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the children remains with the class teacher at all times.

Volunteers will not usually be unsupervised. However, student teachers nearing the completion of their training may wish to take sole responsibility for some lessons. Such an arrangement must be negotiated and agreed with the University supervisor.

3. Safeguarding Checks

It is Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and school policy that all volunteers will be required to obtain a DBS disclosure at the appropriate level if they

- work directly and regularly (once a week or more) or intensively (four or more times in a thirty day period) with children in school.

The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

4. Volunteers not requiring an Enhanced Disclosure

Volunteers or parents who accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fetes, school sports days etc and who do not have unsupervised access to children.

5. Regular Volunteer Checklist

Have you completed the school's own application form to be a volunteer?

This must be completed before you start volunteering and your application agreed by the Headteacher. The Headteacher has the right to decline your offer to volunteer.

Have you provided the school with the names and contact details of two contacts who can provide a reference for you?

These may be employers but may equally be someone who knows you well and can act as a character reference for you. They will be asked if you are a suitable candidate to work with children.

Have you completed the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) form?

All regular volunteers must have clearance under this scheme. Forms are available from the school office and staff will explain which personal identification documents they require.

Do you sign in at the main school office?

When any volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office and collect a visitor/volunteer helper badge which must be worn at all times in school. Please indicate your arrival time and which class you will be visiting.

Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises.

Are you prepared to maintain confidentiality about your volunteering in school?

We recognise that for staff and parents of other children to be confident about helpers in school all volunteers will need to agree to a protocol about confidentiality and conduct.

Are you prepared to volunteer in classes other than your own child's class?

It is the policy of the school to ask parents not to support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child. Helpers will be asked to support in classes where there is the most need for support.

6. Monitoring and Review

The day to day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility for the Headteacher and Leadership Team. The Headteacher will report to Governors annually on the number of parent volunteers in school and summarising their value and impact in supporting children's learning.