



# THE PARK COMMUNITY SCHOOL

# Volunteers in School Policy

## Policy Update

**Policy Lead Person:** Headteacher

**Approved By:** Local Governing Board (25.06.2020)

**Next Review Date** 06/22

**Due:**

- Staff *must* sign
- Staff *should* sign
- Governors *should* sign
- Publicly Available

# VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOLS Policy

## **Based Upon Guidelines Recommended by Devon County Council**

### Purposes

- Volunteers are a welcome resource for helping to raise children's achievement, complementing the work of teachers and support staff.
- The school can benefit greatly from developing well-planned, active parental and community links through participation by adults in the activities of the school on a voluntary basis.
- The role of volunteers in school provides for the enrichment of the student's learning experiences, whilst not encroaching upon nor restricting professional teaching duties.

### Guidelines

- The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, must be managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of students and the staff to whom they are assigned.
- This deployment must be appropriate and volunteers will not be asked to replace paid staff nor be given responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees.
- Volunteers should not be 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, i.e. they must not be 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
- The class teacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work.
- During a visit to the school each volunteer will be designated to 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 would be 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 and should only be delegated with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is however essential that the volunteer is clear as

to which member of staff has this responsibility.

- All volunteers will be made to feel welcome. It is important that the parameters of their role within the school are clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding. All stakeholders should refer to the school's '*Handbook for Volunteers working in Schools*'.
- Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the current needs of the school, the offer of help will be declined.

#### School Regulations and Other Information

- In fairness to all concerned, volunteers will be made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the school: the key 'dos' and 'do not's' for children and adults. This will include 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 will also be provided with basic information such as a plan of the campus and details of those facilities available to them, e.g. staffroom, toilets etc, via the school's '*Handbook for Volunteers working in Schools*'.

#### Child Protection

- Enhanced Disclosure Checks will be obtained for volunteers whose job involves regularly caring for, training, supervising or being in sole charge of children under 18 years of age. This 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 or unsupervised access also fall under this category. In these circumstances, volunteers will be required to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Application.
- Volunteers will be issued with a visitor's badge on arrival to the school and made aware of the school's safeguarding standards and procedures.

**It is the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that volunteers do not have unsupervised access to children prior to a clear DBS check being received by the school.**

The Headteacher will take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. Appropriate forms of identification must be provided by the volunteer in accordance with the Disclosure and Barring Service Checks Guidance.

These regulations do not apply to volunteers such as those who help organise and run fetes or who may assist with school activities on an adhoc basis – supervised at all times - but should apply to volunteers that drive children in cars or minibuses and assist regularly with school activities (e.g. Parents & Friends Association). However, if the Headteacher is unclear about the position in respect of a volunteer, further advice is available from the School’s HR Advisory Service and the Authority’s DBS Officer.

### Insurance

- Volunteers will be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Under our RPA insurance scheme voluntary workers are defined as employees.
- Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events (sports, music etc.) will be made aware of the school policy and advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their own insurance policy conditions.
- The school will carefully consider 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 should be offered appropriate training and instruction before **passing the Devon County driving test. This is essential before** taking children on journeys in vehicles owned by the school.

### Allowances

- Although there is no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers, it would be appropriate to consider paying out-of-pocket expenses connected with the tasks they undertake for the school. The school will reimburse direct travel costs on production of a valid receipt. Other materials should be ordered directly by the school.
- State benefits claimed by volunteers can be affected by voluntary work and schools are strongly advised to refer volunteers to their local Jobcentre Plus Office or 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.

### **KS4 Students on Work Experience and Related Placements**

- Whilst the school will take all reasonable steps to secure a student’s safety and wellbeing, by the nature of this context in which employees and others are providing a service to help the school and its students, the rigorous personnel checks noted above are less practicable. Placements will be subject to the required health and safety checks, with school staff also visiting/making contact to reassure that

all is as appropriate as it is possible to make it, with monitoring visits follow up. Work experience is organised by a third party who ensures appropriate checks are in place.

- Parents/carers will be provided with full details prior to placement and their consent confirmed.
- A named member of staff will act as the link between the school and the placement, regularly monitoring by meeting with the student to confirm all is well.