



Queen's Park Primary School Volunteer's policy

The aim of this policy is to:

- To provide volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures

Introduction

Volunteers are parents or other adults working alongside school staff and students on work experience. At Queen's Park Primary School we welcome those wishing to help in the school and value the contribution they make to school life. We believe that the involvement of parents, carers and volunteers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come into school to help with a variety of tasks such as ICT, art, cooking and especially reading. They usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. In addition, volunteers often help when the children are taken on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of our Parent - Teacher Association.

Aims and Ethos

Queen's Park Primary is a good school with wonderful pupils and a great staff and governor team. Our vision is to develop a learning community in which everyone is supported in becoming a caring, collaborative, critical and creative thinker. As an inclusive school, we celebrate diversity and value the achievements of all children. We are committed to providing the greatest possible access for all children by offering a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum, which is appropriate for meeting their needs. We particularly wish to ensure that parents and pupils are fully participative in the process.

This mission statement and vision, agreed by all, is key to the way we work and we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement with it, and to work hard to achieve it!

Safeguarding

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, volunteers who are not already known to the school will be asked to attend an informal interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. The Head Teacher has the authority to decline the offer of help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children. We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. All schools need

to hold a register of the checks undertaken. All volunteers are required to complete a DBS online check. The school will help to get the process started. All information will be treated in the strictest confidence. These checks are made only in the best interests and safety of the children.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fairs, Learning Journey visits etc, who do not have unsupervised access to children do not require DBS clearance; they must not have unsupervised access to children.

Becoming a Volunteer in School

All volunteers will be asked to attend an induction meeting which will cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty
- Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Fire

Deployment of Volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to provide support in classes / areas of the school where there is the most need. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not always be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting and may place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the discretion of the Head Teacher. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he / she will not always be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit or if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g. supporting practical science work).

Volunteer Roles in School

Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that parents do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Sharing books (please see Appendix Two)
- Working on the computer
- Playing games
- Making things
- Cooking
- Topic related studies
- Accompanying staff and children on outside visits

The teacher will give you clear guidelines about the activity and all the materials you need.

Procedures and Protocols

Health and Safety / Safeguarding

When a volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office. Please indicate your arrival time and which class you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for. A visitor badge must be worn at all times in school. Volunteers with a DBS clearance will have been identified to staff members. The Head Teacher has the authority to withdraw the help of volunteers if she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

Confidentiality

It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school adhere to a policy of confidentiality. While in school, volunteers may become aware of issues relating to individual children. They may see children struggling with work, be upset or misbehaving or hear / see other information concerning a child. It is vital that this information about specific children is not shared with friends or family or a child's parent. Teachers have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in classrooms do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school. If a volunteer ever has any concerns about a child, they should speak to the class teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.

Volunteers are asked to sign a 'Volunteer Code of Conduct' a copy of which will be kept in school. Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the Prevent Duty (see Appendix Four) about a child must be shared immediately with one of the designated officers for child protection as soon as possible after the disclosure. The designated officers for child protection are: Head Teacher, Deputy Head Teacher and INCO.

Appendix One

Guidelines for Supporting Children in School

It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary.

There is no rush. We give the children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.

Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although some children may need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Please don't be tempted to do the work for them! The learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is often much more important than the end product!

When playing games with the children, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser.

It is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.

Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

Housekeeping

Mobile phones - We would be most grateful if you could keep your mobile phone switched off whilst helping in school, and to place the phone in a secure place such as the school office.

First Aid - Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or teacher on playground duty if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.

Fire alarm - If the fire alarm sounds, please make your way safely to the nearest exit, guiding the child you are working with if you are away from the main class.

Attendance - If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it would be really helpful to know in advance, even if that is only by phone message left on the morning in question.

Employment references

Occasionally volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months attendance of regular volunteering (e.g. once a week) before we feel able to provide a work-based reference. We believe that this is fair to both prospective employers and candidates.

Thank you!

In case we forget to say so please be assured that we really do appreciate your help (we may sometimes

forget to say so because we are busy, but we do!!) If you have any worries or queries, or any good ideas on how we can improve something, please let us know - we are always willing to listen.

Appendix Two

What does 'sharing books with children mean?

A few quick pointers to help you when you are asked to read or share a book with a child:

The teacher will indicate whether you should read to the child or the child should read to you. If this is not clear please ask.

If the child appears 'stuck', tell them gently to use their phonics and 'sound it out' or encourage a sensible guess based on what has already been read or look at the illustrations for clues, and if all else fails, tell them the word. Quite often a lack of confidence will inhibit them from making an attempt and this is what we try to build up when we hear children read - the idea that taking a risk, even if wrong, will teach us something.

Encourage the child to predict what might happen next in the story and discuss how they feel about the story and characters.

Make the experience an enjoyable one, sharing your love of books with the child. This is a moment of quality time for you both.

Please do not move the child onto another box from the reading scheme. If a child has done particularly well in their reading, please be sure to share this with the class teacher. Equally, please let the teacher know of any problems.

Appendix Three

Guidance for Volunteers for School Trips

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy regarding off-site visits. If you have any questions about a school trip, please see the class teacher. We do appreciate your help on school trips – it would be difficult for us to organise visits outside school without parental help and volunteers.

Parents may not always have their own child in their group.

The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.

All children are told that they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times.

If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group put on their seatbelts.

Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bucket / bags, if needed.

The class teacher is responsible for ALL first aid and medication.

The class teacher sets and leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day.

Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions e.g. when to eat and drink.

If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and parents in an emergency situation.

If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g. to take a child to the toilet, please inform another adult.

Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality on visits as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher, or if you would rather, the Head Teacher on return from the trip.

Appendix Four

Safeguarding, including the Prevent Duty

Everyone has a duty to keep children safe. Children may disclose information or worries at any point during the school day. It is not unusual for children to disclose information to people they feel less affiliated to and any situation might trigger this.

If a child says something that concerns you:

DON'T make promises of secrecy

DON'T ask questions of the child

DON'T appear shocked or terrified but instead remain calm and reassuring

DON'T delay in reporting the disclosure

DO listen closely and carefully to everything the child says

DO report it to one of the school's designated officers for child protection immediately

DO complete a written record as soon as possible noting the date, time and as close to the exact wording as you can recall of the child's disclosure.

The school's designated officers for safeguarding are: Ms Murray, Ms Berry and Mrs Peacock.

The Prevent Duty

Schools also have a duty to provide a form of safeguarding to recognise children at risk of, or who may be vulnerable to, potential radicalization. We need to remain mindful of this risk to children and be aware of signs that could warrant early intervention.

This very much follows the same procedures as above in school and should be reported in the same manner. Signs could include:

- Expressing extreme views regarding people of other ethnicities, cultures or faiths.
- Unusual or unsafe online activity
- Disclosures regarding family members' views or behaviours towards other ethnic groups
- Signs of isolation, fear or rejection of peer groups
- Recent political or religious conversion
- Conflict with family over political or religious views