

Halstead CP School

Volunteer Helpers in School Policy



Approved by the Strategy Team

Signed :
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1. Aims

There are four main purposes to this policy:

- 1.1. To enable the opportunities for children to be enriched both within the curriculum and the extended school.
- 1.2. To establish expectations for both staff and volunteer helpers.
- 1.3. To promote continuity and coherence across the school, and promote community cohesion.
- 1.4. To state the school's approaches to volunteer helpers in school, in order to promote volunteers', and particularly parents' and carers', understanding of the curriculum.

2. Introduction

2.1. **The importance of volunteer helpers in school**

The value of well-deployed volunteers in schools is widely recognised. Volunteers are a welcome resource in helping to raise children's achievement, complementing the work of teachers and teaching assistants. Halstead CP School recognises that the school as a whole benefits from the development of active parental and community links. Volunteer helpers in school can enrich pupils' learning experiences; however, they will be appropriately deployed and will not be asked to replace paid staff, nor will they be given responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees.

2.2. **How volunteer helpers contribute to the aims of the school**

Halstead CP School aims to:

- Celebrate the diversity of skills, knowledge, and expertise within our school and wider community.
- Enrich the opportunities within the curriculum through inviting visiting volunteer helpers into school to support, advise, and inform both staff and pupils.
- Provide regular support to pupils and the classroom.
- Provide opportunities for the pupils to gain first-hand insight into areas of knowledge, understanding, and experience not available from other staff, e.g. from discussion with a visiting volunteer helper of a particular faith or religion within a RE unit of work, or a visiting volunteer helper who has lived in a country being studied within a Geography unit of work.

3. Guidelines

3.1. **Deployment of volunteer helpers**

All volunteer helpers at Halstead CP school will be made to feel welcome. The parameters of their rôle within the school will be clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding. The school will provide volunteer helpers with an Agreement (see Appendix 2) outlining their rôle and the boundaries around confidentiality.

During visits to the school or elsewhere with the school, each volunteer helper will be designated a particular member of staff to whom he/she will be directly responsible, although the Head Teacher retains overall responsibility for volunteer helpers in school.

Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer helper, it is expected that time

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will be taken to ensure the volunteer helper is adequately inducted into the rôle, and that there is mutual agreement and understanding.

Responsibility for a volunteer helper is not compulsory for staff and should only be delegated by the Head Teacher with the agreement of the employee concerned. It is, however, essential that the volunteer helper is clear to which member of staff they are directly responsible.

All volunteer helpers in Halstead CP School will be made aware of the following, as appropriate:

- 3.1.1. Volunteer helpers at Halstead CP School will not have unsupervised access to children.
- 3.1.2. Location of lavatories, and invitation to take tea or coffee at break times.
- 3.1.3. Location of areas in which they will be working.
- 3.1.4. Fire alarm procedures.
- 3.1.5. Expectations with regard to confidentiality.
- 3.1.6. Access to information (as necessary) in relation to staff and pupils.
- 3.1.7. Expected level of behaviour, and an awareness of professional codes of conduct.
- 3.1.8. The following school policies:
 - 3.1.8.1. Volunteer Helpers in School
 - 3.1.8.2. Equality and inclusion
 - 3.1.8.3. Confidentiality
 - 3.1.8.4. Complaints policy
 - 3.1.8.5. Staff Grievance/Conduct/Discipline
 - 3.1.8.6. Anti-bullying

Volunteer helpers will not be asked to carry out duties which fall normally within a teacher's responsibility *in loco parentis*, or which fall normally within the job description of a teacher or teaching assistant i.e. covering for absence.

It is noted that the class teacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class, and methods of work.

4. Child Protection

The law requires checks to be made on anyone with responsibilities in a school which can give them regular unsupervised access to pupils under the age of 19. The Education (Teachers)(Amendment) Regulation 1998 now includes volunteers who regularly help in the classroom, in extra curricular activities, and/or who supervise pupils on school organised residential visits or holidays.

Volunteers will be asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Enhanced Disclosure Application form. The school will submit this to the DBS to enable a check to be made before the volunteer helper commences duties.

Important: it is the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that volunteer helpers have appropriate access to children, and that they have undergone the required DBS checks.

The Head Teacher will take all responsible steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering to help in school.

The above does not apply to volunteers who, for example, help organise and run the school Fêtes, or who may assist the school in activities on an irregular or *ad*

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hoc basis. It does apply to volunteers who drive pupils in cars or minibuses. If the Head Teacher is unclear about the status of a volunteer then further advice from the DBS officer (Mrs Dolley) will be taken.

5. **Insurance**

Volunteer helpers will be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. While volunteering in school they are covered by the LA for third party liability only, and the limitations of this insurance will be carefully explained to them as they may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury, or damage to their own property.

Volunteer helpers using their own car to transport pupils other than their own children to school events (sports, music, etc) should be made aware of the school's insurance cover and advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their insurance policy conditions.

6. **Allowances**

The school is under no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers. However, the governing body will consider paying out-of-pocket expenses to volunteers connected with the tasks they undertake for the school, and this is reviewed annually.

7. **Extension or Extra-Curricular opportunities**

Medium-term planning may identify opportunities for visits and fieldwork, if appropriate to the unit of work. The planning of such activities will be in line with school policy and practice, and will be discussed with the Head Teacher before firm plans are made. Such visits may include and involve volunteer helpers.

8. **Inclusion**

Halstead CP School recognises that there will be times when the school requests the support of a volunteer helper for whom particular arrangements are necessary. The school operates an inclusive policy, and all offers of help from volunteers will be considered on an equal basis. Offers of help will be accepted purely because they fit the needs identified for the specific group of pupils and enhance and support what is on offer at the school, both within – and in addition to – the curriculum.

9. **Health & Safety**

Safe practice must be promoted at all times. The school has a [Health & Safety Policy](#) and maintains records of Risk Assessment. All volunteers will have their attention drawn to : identified risks: the teacher will explain the risk to the volunteer helper, and any specific actions which should or should not be taken by the volunteer helper.

10. **Monitoring and Review**

This policy is reviewed every 2 years or whenever deemed necessary by the Head Teacher and Governors in the light of events and changes in the law.

APPENDIX 1

RÔLE & RESPONSIBILITIES FOR VOLUNTEER HELPERS

Volunteer helpers fulfil a vital rôle in the school's work, and will be welcomed and appreciated at our school. Their unique and valuable contribution within the school environment may be utilised in many areas:

- Paired reading
- Classroom activities
- Craftwork
- Sports activities
- Library
- Computing
- Cataloguing resources
- School outings

In order to comply with legislation, Halstead CP School must insist that all volunteer helpers undertake a DBS Enhanced Disclosure before being allowed to volunteer in school.

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer helper in our school should contact the Head Teacher directly.

Confidentiality Agreement

In order to protect staff and children, the volunteer helper must sign a Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix 2) before helping in school. Everything written in the Confidentiality Agreement must be upheld and respected at all times.

Visitor's Badge

All volunteer helpers should sign in at the office to collect a visitor's badge together with a safeguarding leaflet, and sign out when they leave the premises.

Policies and practices

All volunteer helpers should ensure that they are familiar with the following policies and procedures, copies of which will be supplied by the Head Teacher or class teacher:

Policies

- Behaviour
- Anti bullying
- Physical intervention & restraint
- Equality and inclusion
- Health Safety

Procedures

- Use of a Behaviour diary
- Rewards and consequences
- Fire procedures
- First Aid
- Food allergies

Fire and emergency procedures

If an alarm goes off, all volunteer helpers will be expected to join in the fire drill.

Food and drink

Hot drinks must be in a thermos cup with a lid.

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APPENDIX 2

HALSTEAD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL VOLUNTEER HELPER AGREEMENT

The wellbeing of our pupils and staff are at the centre of our vision at Halstead Community Primary School. As a volunteer helper I agree to adhere to the following procedures and expectations when helping in school with reading, class activities, preparing resources, when involved with a working party addressing a particular area of school life, when accompanying pupils on an outing, and at all times when I have direct contact with pupils and staff.

- I am aware of the school's smart dress code, and will dress appropriately.
- I will collect a visitor's badge from the school office, and sign the visitor's book when entering the premises and on leaving.
- I respect the need for confidentiality when working with pupils. I agree not to discuss or disclose any information about pupils' levels, or their needs and behaviour, with anyone other than the Class Teacher or the Head Teacher in or out of school.
- I understand that this confidentiality agreement also applies to my working with staff and our behaviour towards each other. I also agree to respect staff's privacy, as I expect the school to respect mine.
- I will be a rôle model at all times, following the school's expectations as set out in the Teaching & Learning policy and the Behaviour policies.
- I fully understand that if at any time I am in breach of this agreement I will not be permitted to continue as a volunteer helper in the school.
- I agree to complete an Enhanced DBS check in advance of my volunteering.

Signed Dated

(PRINT NAME)