

INFORMATION FOR VOLUNTEERS HELPING IN SCHOOL INTRODUCTION

Ellesmere Primary School, like many schools, uses volunteers to help deliver children's learning. We view this help as invaluable, both in terms of classroom help, and activities outside of the classroom, and we actively encourage parents to become involved in this way.

Volunteers may include:

- Parents or other family members
- College students
- High school students
- Students training to be teachers
- Local authority sports development officers

We use these groups of people in a variety of ways to deliver and extend the curriculum eg.

- To support and work alongside teachers in the classroom
- To support and work alongside teachers in the development of the school clubs and sporting activities
- To help with transport for sporting activities
- To help with off-site visits

POLICY OBJECTIVES:

- To ensure pupil confidentiality
- To ensure continuing home/school trust
- To value voluntary helpers
- To ensure voluntary helpers have clear roles
- To ensure voluntary helpers have adequate Health & Safety support
- To enhance the children's education while not diluting the roles and responsibilities of the teacher
- To ensure that the clear communication strategy that exists between home and school is not clouded by the use of voluntary helpers
- To formulate an agreement between school and the voluntary helper
- To address child safety issues
- To ensure positive links between school and the local community

RESPONSIBILITY FOR VOLUNTARY HELPERS

In law, the School board has a duty of care that operates for any activity in which pupils are engaged. Teachers cannot transfer this duty, and therefore must ensure that voluntary helpers work alongside them, under their direction. This supervision is necessary to ensure that:

- Facilities and equipment are used safely and are matched to the abilities of the pupils
- School principles are observed
- Pupils are provided with the appropriate opportunities
- The safety of the children is ensured (working in groups of more than 1)
- Pupil confidentiality is maintained Before a voluntary helper is invited to work with our children the Headteacher must be informed.

North West Academies Trust have decided that no police checks will be carried out unless the voluntary helper is to have unsupervised access to children or is accompanying staff and children on a residential visit.

If voluntary helpers are used to transport children (e.g. to a sporting event) then appropriate school documents will be completed. The school and its teachers also have a duty to the voluntary helpers. Adults helping in any way should have a clear understanding of what is expected of them.

This may take the form of a simple lesson plan with the details of the voluntary helper's role and any relevant support considered necessary for you to carry out the task. It may be a verbal instruction, or written details (eg. for a trip).

It may be relevant to give support regarding the correct vocabulary to use when introducing concepts to the children, as consistency with the class teacher is critical (eg. In maths, add/plus/and are all terms related to addition, but are used at specific times).

Resources should be provided by the teacher, but on occasions you may be asked to help collect or prepare these.

On arrival at the school, Volunteers should sign in at the main office. They should also ensure that they familiarise themselves with the procedures for emergency evacuation of the building and, if in doubt, consult a member of staff with regard to these.

We expect children to treat all voluntary helpers with respect and courtesy and you should discuss problems with the class teacher so that they can be sorted out.

WHAT MIGHT VOLUNTARY HELPERS BE ASKED TO DO?

Tasks may vary from class to class and from week to week . One of the most valuable characteristics of a voluntary helper is that they can be flexible. However, if you have particular skills or preferences, staff will always take these into account rather than lose you as a helper! Teachers will give specific instructions where necessary.

The list may include: Reading with groups/individuals Playing literacy/numeracy games Mounting work or sticking in children's books Working with art groups Sharpening pencils and generally helping to tidy the classroom Photocopying Working with individuals/groups on the computer/ipads Escorting groups of children in/outside the school as they carry out activities Escorting children on walks (these would include a teacher) Helping with trips Helping with sporting activities Preparing resources

RESPONSIBILITY OF VOLUNTARY HELPERS

Above all, we ask that all voluntary helpers observe confidentiality regarding things overheard or observed in the school and in the staff room. We welcome voluntary helpers in the staffroom at play-times, but do ask that you are aware of the sensitive nature of some things that might be brought to your attention. We also ask that any concerns about a particular child or group of children be discussed with the teacher only. It is the responsibility of the teacher to discuss any issues or concerns about a child with their parents. Similarly in the event of a parent raising a concern about their child with you, you should not enter into any discussion regarding this matter, but direct them to the class teacher.

At times, some parents experience problems with their own children whilst they are helping in school. If this is the case, the class teacher will discuss this situation with you and help you to resolve any problems. As a general rule, you should encourage your child to see you as a member of staff and to behave as would normally be expected in school. Younger children can be 'clingy' for a time, but usually this disappears as they get used to the situation. The more you encourage your child to behave as though you are not there, the more successful the situation will be.