

Volunteer Policy

Thornton Primary School



VOLUNTEER POLICY

Introduction

Volunteers at Thornton Primary School bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at the school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community.

Our volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students on placements
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

Some of the types of activities that volunteers are engaged in include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities with children
- Working with children on computers/iPads
- Accompanying school visits

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either as a one off event such as a school visit, or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing children read, should approach the School Reception to request a Volunteer Placement Form or a Work Placement Form. These forms, once completed, are passed into the main office and appointments are made with Assistant Headteacher, Mrs Grace. The appointments comprise a short, informal interview to clarify the type of voluntary work requested and to try to match the volunteer's skills and availability with most suitable school experience.

Volunteer Induction

All volunteers in school will receive induction from the Deputy Headteacher, together with any other members of the Senior Leadership team as necessary. During the induction, this policy and other related policies are shared; expectations and procedures are made clear and guidelines given.

Volunteers will also receive guidance on how to sign into and out of the school as they carry out their voluntary work: an electronic system located in the main Reception area issues photo ID badges for each visit and produces a log of attendance.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the Class Teacher and NOT with the parents of the child/persons outside the school.

Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Headteacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of the Class Teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.

Volunteers have clear guidance from the Class Teacher as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcomes of the activity are. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice/guidance from the Class Teacher in the event of any query/uncertainty regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

Health & Safety

The School has a Health & Safety Policy and this is made available to all Volunteers working in school. Induction will ensure Volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. emergency evacuation of the school) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. DT equipment/accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the Class Teacher, Headteacher or member of the Senior Leadership team.

Safeguarding

The safety and welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following safeguarding procedures:

- All Volunteers must have clearance to work in school by successfully completing the DBS check. This is something the school supports Volunteers with and carries out on their behalf.
- All Volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Health and Safety Policy and Behaviour for Learning Policy as part of the induction process. Volunteers are asked to take copies of these policies away to read and to sign to say they have read and understood them prior to starting their voluntary work in school. In the case of the Safeguarding Policy, volunteers are made aware of how to report Safeguarding concerns to the DSLs so that no concern goes unrecorded.

- All Volunteers work in the classroom with the children and therefore are never in a position where they are alone with a child.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about or by a Volunteer will be referred to a member of the Senior Leadership Team for investigation.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak to a Volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Code of Conduct (see following pages) and seek reassurance that this will not happen again
- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

All Volunteers will be asked to read and sign to say that they understand and will abide by the Volunteer Code of Conduct.

THORNTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

VOLUNTEER CODE OF CONDUCT

Introduction

This Code of Conduct reflects relevant legislation, expectations, and principles for employees, and reflects the requirement that only the highest standards of probity and integrity are expected. The Code sets out the minimum standards that should apply, and is not exhaustive. However, it must be highlighted that non-compliance or claimed ignorance of the Code will result in swift action being taken by the Headteacher.

1. General Requirements

As a Volunteer you must:

- Attend your placement
- Be punctual in time keeping
- Be honest and trustworthy
- Inform school if you are unable to attend at the agreed times
- Take care of yourself, your colleagues and others whilst in school
- Display commitment to the aims and vision of the school, conducting yourself in a manner consistent with these statements at all times
- Conduct your work in a cooperative manner
- Carry out reasonable management requests (from members of the Senior Leadership Team), ensuring that at no time do you knowingly undermine the leadership, management or smooth running of the school
- Accept and adhere to the Volunteer Policy, the Safeguarding Policy, the Behaviour for Learning policy, the Health & Safety Policy, the Emergency Evacuation Policy, and any other school procedures or policies relevant to the work you undertake
- Take care of school property, making careful/best use of resources provided
- Undertake your duties and responsibilities effectively, efficiently and diligently
- Show respect for all people within the school at all times (for children, their families, for colleagues, for the wider community, for employees from other agencies) within the course of your duties, by being polite and courteous to and about others
- Respect the rights of individuals to hold religious or political beliefs, or sexual orientation, different to your own
- Ensure that other commitments, for example part-time employment elsewhere, do not prejudice the capacity to volunteer
- Maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality at all times
- Follow appropriate lines of communication for concerns or complaints
- Disclose as required on appointment, or at any time, any civil, criminal charges or convictions
- Not misrepresent professional qualifications
- Represent the school positively at all times
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate to your role in school

2. With children

As a Volunteer you must:

- Remember that the Safeguarding of the children in school is the school's number one priority
- Support the social, physical, intellectual and emotional development of any child who you come into contact with wherever possible
- Behave with compassion and impartiality
- Be sensitive in expressing criticism of children and avoid hurtful comments of a personal nature
- Do nothing to abuse, exploit or undermine the staff/pupil relationship, which is based on trust
- Respect the confidentiality of information relating to children unless its disclosure is either required by law or is in the best interests of a particular child
- Ensure that reports are based on factual and objective information

3. With Parents/Carers

As a Volunteer you must not discuss a child with a parent/carer or other family member under any circumstances.

4. With Work Colleagues

As a Volunteer you must:

- Exercise the duty of care to all work colleagues – for their physical and emotional health and well being
- Acknowledge the various roles and responsibilities that work colleagues have within school
- Respect work colleagues, particularly if making any assessments, comments or observations of their work, at all times
- Not denigrate a work colleague in the presence of others

5. With the Wider Community

As a Volunteer you must:

- Promote a good working relationship with parents/carers, governors, and other representatives of the local community, in order to create a clear understanding by them of the vision, mission statement and aims of the school
- Be aware of the involvement of the community in the life of the school and understand its unique social, economic and cultural position

6. Social Networking Sites

As a Volunteer you must:

- Ensure use of social networking sites is undertaken with due care and attention. In particular, use of such sites should not involve communication regarding your work at this school or any activities that may bring the school into disrepute and/or question your suitability to work with children.
- Not make 'friends' with pupils of the school on any social media sites under any circumstances.

I have read and understood the school's Volunteer Code of Conduct and am aware of the possible consequences of breaching it.

I also acknowledge I have read and understood the following school policies issued as part of the induction process:

- Volunteer Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour for Learning Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Emergency Evacuation Policy

Name _____

Signed _____

Date _____