



Volunteers in School Policy

Introduction

The value of well-deployed volunteers in schools is widely recognised. At Baston CE Primary School volunteers are a welcome resource in helping us to support children's achievements. The work of the volunteer will complement the work of teachers and support staff and will provide enrichment of the pupils' learning experiences. We see the strength in linking with our community and have no doubt that our children benefit greatly from us all working together.

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 the pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned, as well as the needs of the volunteer.

We are mindful of deploying volunteers appropriately. Volunteers will not be asked to replace paid staff or be given responsibility within the school that would normally be associated with paid employees.

Volunteers are not paid staff and do not have a legally binding contractual relationship with the school. The school regards volunteering as an unpaid activity where someone freely gives their time to help an organisation or an individual who they are not related to.

School Policy

The Governing Body intends that this policy gives a clear statement on the engagement and deployment of volunteers. The policy will be reviewed regularly by the Headteacher and will be revised in response to changing legislation, guidance or practice as necessary.

Deployment

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;
- Expose them to dangerous or hazardous substances or situations.
- Require them to work within the same classroom as their own children.

It should be noted that the Class Teacher remains solely responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work.

All volunteers need to be made to feel welcome. It is important that the parameters of their role within the school are clearly defined from the outset to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding. It is important to match the talents and skills of volunteers to the needs of the school. It is always our aim to ensure volunteers feel valued in the hope that they will continue to support our school. Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the current needs of the school, the offer of help will gently be declined.

Induction and Training

The school will provide all volunteers with an introduction to the organisation as well as induction and any training necessary to the volunteering opportunity.

During their induction visit each volunteer should 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.

Both the supervising member of staff and the volunteer will be required to sign a copy of the Volunteer Induction Checklist to confirm that they understand what is expected of them for the duration of the volunteer's time at the School.

School Regulations and Other Information

In fairness to all concerned, volunteers must be made aware of the rules governing behaviour at the school; the key 'do's and 'don'ts' for children and adults. This should 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 should also be provided the school's Induction Handbook. Volunteers must not use the children's toilets. Volunteers will be briefed on the expected level of behaviour and be given a copy of the school's Code of Conduct for Staff which they will be expected to follow.

Volunteers will also be directed to the school's Equal Opportunities and Equality and Diversity Policies and will be asked to familiarise themselves with the school's stance relating to discrimination and the use of appropriate language. Volunteers themselves will also be subject to these policies.

Health and Safety

We have a duty of care to avoid exposing our volunteers to health and safety risks. All volunteers will be made aware of our Health and Safety Policy and any practical safety concerns as part of their induction. Volunteers are expected to comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy. All volunteer roles will be risk assessed, covering both the tasks involved and the environment in which they will be conducted. In addition, where a volunteer makes us aware of a pre-existing medical condition or disability, an individual risk assessment may also be necessary.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

All supervisors must ensure that during induction volunteers are made aware of the school's Confidentiality and Data Protection Policies as part of the induction process. All volunteers are obliged to comply with these policies.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

All supervisors must ensure that volunteers are aware of, and have received, appropriate training in the school's Safeguarding Policy on Children and Adults.

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks will be carried out on any volunteer who in the course of their activity has regular, unsupervised, contact with the same group of children or young people. Further guidance can be found in the school's safeguarding policies and procedures.

In circumstances where a volunteer's roles will be one-off, such as accompanying teachers and pupils on a day outing or helping at a concert or school fete, these kind of measures would not be necessary provided that the person is not to be left alone and unsupervised in charge of children.

Where volunteers recruited by another organisation work in a school e.g. sports coaches from a local club, the school should obtain assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted prior to the event taking place.

Identification

The school should take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. It is recommended that the senior administrator views, at least two original documents. At least one document must show a current address and at least one document must show the volunteer's date of birth. The senior administrator should also ask for sight of a valid form of identity showing a photograph identifying the volunteer.

The school holds a list of documents which will be accepted and this will be provided to the volunteer by the senior administrator.

Insurance

Volunteers should be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering for the school they are covered by the Local Authority for third party liability only and the limitations of this insurance should be explained carefully to volunteers. They may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property.

Volunteers must sign the Volunteer Indemnity Form on the first day of induction. This provides them with basic accident cover and also indemnifies the volunteer against any claim made against them or the school whilst carrying out their activity.

Volunteers in Receipt of Benefits

It is the responsibility of the volunteer to establish whether volunteering is going to affect their entitlement to any social security benefits. Further advice should be obtained from the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), Job Centre Plus, or Citizens Advice Bureau.

Ongoing Support

All volunteers will receive appropriate support and supervision in their activity. The level of supervision will match the nature of the role and the experience of the volunteer. All volunteers will have a nominated Volunteer Supervisor - someone they can have regular access to - if problems arise or when help and support is needed.

Complaints

As volunteers are not employees, they are unable to use the School's Grievance Policy and Procedure. However, they are entitled to use the school's Complaints Procedure.

Complaints by volunteers should be raised in the first instance with their Volunteer Supervisor and dealt with informally where possible. Where appropriate, the complaint will be investigated fully by their supervisor, or if the complaint is against their own supervisor, by another Volunteer Supervisor or their line manager.

If a complaint is brought against a volunteer, this will be investigated by the relevant supervisor. Every attempt will be made to resolve the matter as quickly and informally as possible. If the issue cannot be satisfactorily resolved, then the volunteer may be told their services are no longer required with immediate effect.

Termination of Activity

Where appropriate, the role and placement of the volunteers may be terminated by the headteacher at one week's notice, or immediately where inappropriate behaviour has occurred. In all cases the volunteer will be entitled to an explanation of the decision and action taken.

Moving On

The school welcomes feedback and encourages volunteers to offer ideas for improvement. Volunteers who choose to stop volunteering at any time will be invited to provide feedback before they move on.

Volunteers who are leaving the school and who have made a regular commitment to it should be offered an exit interview, reference and/or statement of their achievements to ensure that their services are properly and formally appreciated.

Reviewed: 31st August 2023

Next Review Date: 31st August 2025

SIGNED BY THE GOVERNORS ON:

(date)