

BURCHETTS GREEN C.E. INFANT SCHOOL

Guidelines for Adult Volunteers Working in the School

Introduction

The school welcomes and encourages adult help, and in particular parental involvement, with the children's education both in and out of the classroom. The DBS check which is required has now been completed; your contribution is much appreciated. We see it as a means of broadening children's experience through exposure to a wide range of talents and skills and of increasing the ratio of adults to children to provide support and encouragement on a more individual basis.

There are obvious benefits too for parents and other school supporters. By supporting the teaching staff you become familiar with the way that we work, you get to know the children and their friends, and most importantly, links between the child's home and school and between the school and the community are developed. The school is itself a community, and it needs people other than staff and children, especially in one as small as our own.

However, the position that voluntary helpers have in school can be quite confusing for children, particularly if you know them out of school, and indeed, the adults themselves can be uncertain about how they should act in a number of different circumstances. These guidelines are intended to clarify some of the points.

On Arrival at the School

You should ensure that you report to the School Office and sign the Visitors' Book on arrival and departure. You will be issued with a visitors' sticker which should be worn at all times.

Your Work

Teachers should make it clear to you what the task is, how you should set about it and what their expectations are for the children. If you feel that things are not going in the way you expect, or if you have any concerns, then talk to the teacher whom you are helping.

How Pupils should address you

Even though you may usually be known to some of the children by your first name, or even as Mummy, Daddy or Gran, we ask that all the children address you by your title and family name, i.e. Mr or Mrs..... This establishes your formal role with the children within the learning context and helps you to create a good and purposeful working relationship.

Confidentiality

You will not be asked to do anything which might bring you into contact with pupil or staff records or any other information of a confidential nature. However, it is important you recognise that you may accidentally hear conversations between members of staff which are confidential. For the sake of all involved, it is vital that you don't repeat anything you hear outside of the school. It is also worth remembering that you may see or hear things that cannot be fully understood out of context - you may not always have the full story, so don't jump to conclusions!

Safeguarding

Should a child tell you something in confidence, you cannot agree that you will not pass on the information and should allow the child to finish what they want to say. Do not question or prompt them. You must tell the Headteacher about any conversation that you feel may be of significance, however slight. If you are at all unsure or in any doubt, you should seek assurance from the Headteacher. Any conversations of this nature must be kept strictly confidential between the child, Headteacher and yourself. Please see the Headteacher if you are unclear about your responsibilities.

Behaviour

If the children with whom you are working do not behave themselves, then it must be made clear to them that such behaviour is unacceptable and you should ask them to stop. This is usually sufficient, but if it is not, then tell the teacher. Do not get into a confrontation with any child, but do not put up with poor behaviour. This is not expected of you.

Once you've passed a matter over to the teacher, then they will deal with it. If a teacher deals with a situation in a different way to the way you would expect, remember the bigger picture and that the teacher knows the background to all the pupils. The teacher makes a professional judgement on how to react in a particular situation. For example, sometimes poor behaviour is an attention-seeking ploy, and if a teacher knows that this is what is happening, then they may ignore the child at the time. This doesn't mean that the teacher isn't interested or that the problem won't be dealt with. Remember that teachers have a different relationship with children than parents. They are also dealing with large groups of children which is not the same situation as a family.

If you see children from another teaching group misbehaving, then once again it's appropriate for you to let them know that you don't like what they are doing and to inform their teacher if the misbehaviour continues.

It is almost certain that the correct response to any given situation will be the common sense one. The best thing to do if you're not certain how to deal with a situation that has arisen is to ask a member of staff. Bear in mind that if you need to discuss a problem of situation with a teacher, you should choose the moment sensibly. Teachers are not very receptive if they are in the middle of a lesson or dealing with another situation themselves.

Cleaning Up

Pupils are expected to tidy up at the end of each activity. Although they may need to be reminded and will always appreciate your help, it is important that you do not do it all for them. This gets them into good habits, and will help the teacher enormously the next time she is looking after the class on her own.

Children do not always follow the routes that we would like. However, children always benefit from the receiving the same consistent messages from both teachers and parents. It is important that our expectations should be high and clear.

Siblings

The presence of babies and pre-school age children in the classroom is a tremendous distraction both to our own pupils and to the parent trying to help. For this reason we ask that siblings do not accompany parent volunteers, even if this means not being able to help on a regular basis.

Tea and Coffee

Apart from the midday break, there is no set time for a break during the teaching sessions. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the kitchen which you are welcome to use. Please tidy up and put your cup in the dishwasher.

First Aid

The school always aims to have at least one qualified First Aider and will deal with any accident or injury which happens in the school, either to yourself or to one of the children. A list of names is on the First Aid Cupboard. Even if you feel the injury is only minor and you are more than able to deal with it yourself, please bear in mind that the school's insurance will not cover this eventuality. Just in case something goes wrong, please ask a teacher to carry out any treatment required. They can then record their actions in the accident book for future reference and the school fulfil its obligations under Health & Safety regulations.

REVIEW

These guidelines will be subject to review every two years or more frequently in the light of changes in legislation, advice from the LA or Diocese or following consultation with the professional teaching staff of the school.

These guidelines were approved by the Education Committee on the 27th April 2022