

St. Luke's Halsall C.E Primary School  
**Volunteer Handbook**

**Date of policy:** April 2015

**Review date:** April 2018

### **Ethos Statement**

At St. Luke's Halsall we recognize that everyone is made in the image of God and that we are privileged to be part of the lives of the children we educate and nurture.

We also recognize that a strong partnership between pupils, staff, parents and governors will enable us to realize our mission statement, "Inspiring lives, building futures together with Jesus", striving to ensure that our values and decisions are made based on the values Jesus taught us.

We would like to thank you for the time and hard work that you are prepared to put in to helping at school. Your support will enable us to offer children wider experiences in their education and help them to further develop their skills and understanding. The following instructions are provided to ensure that everyone who works with us to support children does so safely and effectively. We hope that you will enjoy your time with us.

- 1) Safer Working Practices
- 2) Instructions for supporting reading
- 3) Instructions for accompanying swimming
- 4) Instructions for supporting clubs and other enrichment activities
- 5) Instructions for volunteer drivers
- 6) A Volunteer Helper's Risk assessment

### **1) Safer Working Practices**

These instructions and guidelines are adapted from an original document produced by a DCSF network of Advisors and documents

They apply to all adults volunteering in the school whatever their position, role, or responsibilities, or volunteering to help at school events outside the school or outside the school day

### **Confidentiality**

Volunteers should:

- be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- are expected to treat information they receive about children in a discreet and confidential manner
- should seek advice from a member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them
- report any concerns or allegations to the Head/Senior member of staff

## **Making a Professional Judgement**

Where no specific guidance exists volunteers should:

- discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with the Head
- report any actions which could be misinterpreted to the Head
- always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the Head
- always record discussions and reasons why actions were taken.
- record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and if necessary referred to a higher authority

## **Unsuitability**

Volunteers should:

- have a clear understanding about the nature and content
- discuss any uncertainties or confusion with Head
- understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to volunteer with children

## **Duty of Care**

Volunteers should:

- understand their responsibilities of their role and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour

## **Positions of Power and Trust**

Volunteers should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so

## **Propriety and Behaviour**

Volunteers should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to help with children or act as a role model.
- make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such
- be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their role with children
- follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by the school
- understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to help with children and young people

## **Infatuations**

Volunteers should:

- report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may have developed an infatuation with an adult in the workplace
- always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries

## **Dress and Appearance**

Volunteers should wear clothing which:

- is appropriate to their role
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

## **Personal Living Space**

Volunteers should:

- be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries
- refrain from asking children to undertake personal jobs or errands

## **Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism**

Volunteers should:

- be aware of the school's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
- only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system and cleared with staff
- ensure that all selection processes which concern children are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff

## **Communication with Children**

Volunteers should:

- not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites
- only make contact with children for professional reasons and through a member of staff
- recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to a child in a crisis situation or at risk of harm.
- not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child
- ensure that if a social networking site is used, details are not shared with children and young people and privacy settings are set at maximum

## **Intimate care**

Volunteers should:

- not undertake any intimate care of a child

## **Social contact**

Volunteers should:

- have no secret social contact with children and young people or their parents
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- never have any planned social contact with children without the parents permission
- advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or a parent with who whom they work, which may give rise to concern
- report and record any situation, which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the school or their own professional standing

- be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with a member of staff.
- understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.

## **Sexual contact**

Volunteers should not:

- have sexual relationships with children
- have any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative Le. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- make sexual remarks to, or about, a child
- discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children Volunteers should:
- ensure that their relationships with children clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful professional relationship
- take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

## **Physical Contact**

Volunteers should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- not indulge in 'horseplay'
- always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- work within Health and Safety regulations
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender
- understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted

## **Other activities that require physical contact**

Volunteers should:

- treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- seek consent of parents/staff where a child or young person is unable to do so because of a disability.
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child might misinterpret any such contact,
- be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- be aware of gender, cultural or religious Issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact

## **Home visits**

Volunteers should

- not undertake home visits to children



## **Behaviour management**

Volunteers should:

- seek advice from staff if sanctions are deemed necessary
- not use force as a form of punishment
- try to defuse situations before they escalate
- inform staff of any behaviour management techniques used, after clearing with staff first
- adhere to the school's behaviour management policy
- be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action

## **Use of control and physical intervention**

Volunteers should:

- adhere to the school's physical intervention policy - no physical intervention except in an emergency to prevent harm to a child
- always seek to defuse situations
- always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.

## **Children in distress**

Volunteers should:

- consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child and do it in an age appropriate way
- be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances
- follow professional guidance or code of practice where available
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party
- not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed

## **Personal Care**

Volunteers should:

- avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering
- not change in the same place as children
- not shower or bathe with children
- not assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves

## **One to one situations**

Volunteers should:

- not enter into a one to one situation with a child

- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague

## **First Aid and administration of medication**

Volunteers should:

- not administer any first aid or medication to a child if a member of staff is present
- if no staff member is present make other adults aware of the task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening.
- always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests
- report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- have regard to any health plan which is in place
- always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities

## **Transporting children**

Volunteers should:

- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer
- record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety including child seats. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned

## **Whistle blowing**

Volunteers should:

- report any behaviour by adults that raises concern. The school has a whistle blowing policy which can be obtained at the office and the staffroom.

## **Trips and Outings**

Volunteers should:

- always have another adult present in out of school activities
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times
- on a residential never share beds with a child/children.
- not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with the Head

## **Internet usage**

Volunteers should:

- follow the school's guidance on the use of IT equipment
- ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet

- ensure that any films or material shown to children and young people are age appropriate i.e. U rated films. PG rated films may only be shown with the Head's permission as parental permission is required
- only use websites approved in advance by the staff

## **Photography and videos**

Volunteers should:

- only take photos with the permission of a senior staff member
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.
- only use equipment provided or authorised by the school
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- always ensure they have checked if the school has parental permission to take and/or display photographs

Volunteers should not:

- display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from the Head
- use images which may cause distress
- use mobile telephones to take images of children
- take images 'in secret', or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.

## **Sharing concerns and reporting Incidents**

Volunteers should:

- report concerns to The Head
- if the concerns are about the Head report them to the Chair of Governors
- should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school

## 2) Reading - INSTRUCTIONS FOR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for helping with reading in school. You are supporting less confident readers who, with your help, will become more confident readers. Please be as positive as you can and enjoy each other's company and achievements.

The session should be structured in the following way.

- Listen to the child read some text.
- If they are stuck on a word use one or more of the following strategies –
  1. sound out the word looking closely at the initial, middle and end sounds
  2. read around the word to gain meaning from the context
  3. look for any picture clues
  4. do not be afraid to tell them the word if this is taking a long time
- Ask the child to re-read some text putting in expression – dialogue is particularly useful for this.
- Ask the child about what they have just read. This could include –
  1. factual questions
  2. questions about inferred meanings
  3. questions about meanings of words or phrases
  4. ask them to point to the relevant text that confirms their ideas
- Ask the child about the book as a whole. Questions could be about –
  1. characters
  2. setting
  3. atmosphere
  4. plot
  5. resolution
  6. interesting words and phrases
  7. any other books by the same author – differences / similarities
  8. similar stories
  9. personal opinion of the story
  10. who to recommend the book to
  11. ask them to point to the relevant text that confirms their ideas
- Please use terms like – character, plot, setting, atmosphere, resolution so the children learn what they mean.
- Finally write a brief comment in the child's record book.

***Remember you should both enjoy the session!***