



## **VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL POLICY**

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*Our vision: Learning Together with Kind Hearts and Determined Minds*

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## **1. Policy Statement**

Borough Green Primary School is committed to the principle of respecting diversity and fostering equality in everything it does. All policies will be developed and implemented throughout the school based on that principle.

The School has established a policy in support of Parents (and other adults) wishing to work as volunteers in School. There are two main ways of helping: -

a) Occasional support e.g. at sports events or school trips. These are individual events and generally parents/volunteers only commit themselves to one or two occasions.

b) Regular support. This is when volunteers offer regular weekly support to the school for a period of time. Usually the commitment will be for at least a term and will consist of one or two timetabled weekly sessions.

We encourage and recognise parents as educators and welcome volunteers in to school once all appropriate checks have been carried out. This policy will be shared with all volunteers.

## **2. Guidelines for Volunteers Working in School**

### 2.1 Welcome to our School

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at Borough Green Primary School.

Volunteering can take many forms and we appreciate the help that our volunteers give us to support the work of the school.

We value our volunteers and we hope that you will enjoy working with us. We have produced this guide to help you feel comfortable working in school and we hope that you will also feel able to ask any questions as they arise.

The points of contact for volunteers in school are as follows:

- the class teacher you work with
- the school office
- the Assistant or Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher

It is important for school security and fire regulations that all staff, volunteers and visitors to the school can be identified and located at all times and we ask you to follow the simple routine of :-

- a) Signing in and out when coming into and leaving the premises
- b) Wearing the Visitor lanyard we give you at all times whilst in school

### 2.2 Where can I work?

Please let us know if you have a strong preference about the age group with which you would like to work or if there is a particular task on which you would like to focus. You might even have a preference for which class you would like to volunteer and where possible we will try to meet your preferences. If you find you do not enjoy the volunteering opportunity we offer, please let us know as it is important that we continue to work in partnership for the benefit of our children.

### 2.3 How much time must I give?

Some volunteers prefer to have a set time and day when they are able to volunteer and this does work best for the school as your additional support can be timetabled.

All we ask is that you let us know if you have made an arrangement with the school but find that you can't come. Your work in school is valuable and the teacher may have been counting on you to help with an activity that cannot go ahead without you.

School is a work place and you will be supporting children's learning and joining a committed team of staff and volunteers.

### 2.4 Where can I go in school?

As a volunteer you will be expected to work with the teacher with whom you have been placed to help. For most of the school day, therefore, you will be sharing the classroom with the teacher concerned or in a communal area such as the library. The teacher will be responsible for you and, if you are in any doubt about your role, where you should be working or questions about the school, please ask the teacher.

If you are with us during break times, you can join the teachers in the staffroom but please note that information seen or heard in the staffroom is strictly confidential. You can leave your personal belongings in the staff room and can use the staff toilets. Please do not use the children's toilets.

## **3 What should I do if I have a problem whilst working in school?**

We expect all members of the school community to be polite, courteous and self-disciplined. Pupils watch us and follow our example. Please discuss any problems with the teacher, Assistant/Deputy Headteacher or Headteacher. The teachers in school are expected to act "in loco parentis" — this means in place of the parents. The teachers are responsible for the children whilst they are at school.

3.1 Never get into an argument with children or adults. Teachers are trained to deal with problem situations and they are paid to take responsibility.

3.2 You should expect the children you are working with to be polite and well-behaved. As a volunteer you are not expected to discipline children. If there is a problem, inform the class teacher immediately.

The only time we would expect a volunteer to intervene is to prevent children hurting themselves or another child. Do this by telling them quietly and firmly to stop. Avoid physically restraining a child unless they are going to hurt another child or themselves, do this with great care and call for help immediately.

3.3 Read the school's Equality information and objective to ensure you are treating all children and staff equally. This is available on the school website or from the school office.

3.4 Never shout at a child.

3.5 Never hit a child.

3.6 Never threaten to hit or manhandle a child.

## 4 Safeguarding

Once a satisfactory DBS and reference has been returned the following policies and documents must be read:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) Part 1 including Annex A
- Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Disqualification document
- Safeguarding summary for Volunteers
- Managing Allegations Against Staff summary
- Volunteers in School Policy

See the school website or school office for full versions of each of these policies/documents.

Whilst working with children all adults have to be sensitive to how children present themselves and to what they say. The Safeguarding Policy states: Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** that comes into contact with children and their families and carers has a role to play in safeguarding children. At all times you should consider what is in the **best interests** of the child.

Concerns about safeguarding/child protection (which includes e-safety) often develop over time as a "jigsaw" of signs. The role of Borough Green Primary School in situations where there are child protection concerns is NOT to investigate but to recognise and refer. If volunteers have any concerns about a child then they must inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), the Headteacher or the Inclusion Manager. They will assist you with recording what has happened, or your concern, using a "Report of Concern" form. It must be emphasised that volunteers do not ask leading questions but simply report and refer their concerns to the DSL or Deputy DSL.

As part of our Safeguarding procedures please ensure that mobile phones are not used or visible during your time in school. If you need to make an urgent call you are welcome to do this in the staffroom.

### 5 Am I insured whilst working in school?

You will be insured for the same activities as teachers. If you transport other people's children either in your own vehicle you will need to be certain that your insurance policy or that of the school covers you, that the correct permissions have been sought and that a suitable child seat is used when necessary. Please check with the school office or your teacher.

### 6 If I am claiming state benefits such as job seekers allowance or sickness benefit, will I be able to work as a volunteer at school?

The rules change sometimes and your local Council for Voluntary Services (NWKCVS) will be able to offer you straightforward advice if you have any doubts.

<https://local.kent.gov.uk/kb5/kent/directory/service.page?id=r5rIDj8zitg&adultchannel=0>

### 7 What work should I not undertake?

Some activities would bring volunteers into conflict with employed persons and may strain

industrial relations. The school will know which these are and will advise you.

Health and Safety Regulations will prevent you undertaking some activities. These Regulations are available for you to read.

Some activities will expose you to unnecessary risks and teachers supervising your work should ensure that this does not happen. For example, never be left alone with a child. You should be clear about your responsibilities and your role at the school. If in doubt, check with the Headteacher.

## **8 Do I need to fill in any forms?**

For legal reasons all adults with substantial and long-term contact with children in Borough Green Primary School must undergo a check with the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service). We will help you fill in the form and explain it to you. This is for the safety of the children which you will agree is of prime importance. You will also be asked to sign a document to confirm that you have read and understood the documents/policies listed above (point 4).

We will also agree with you a nominated teacher as your main contact in Borough Green Primary School. Whilst you are working in the school, please tell this teacher where you will be if you are not working with them. If there is a fire drill or an emergency and you cannot be located we will contact that teacher first. This is very important for your safety.

## **9 Confidentiality**

We expect our volunteers to abide by the same code of confidentiality as teachers. Please ask your teacher about this. Any concerns must be referred to the teacher.

We would like to thank you for offering to volunteer to help at our school. We regard you as a friend of the school and member of our team. We have a professional duty to you - just as we have to all members of staff and aim to make your time with us happy and fulfilling.