



# Adult Volunteers Policy

2022-2023

## **Introduction**

At Rossington St Michael's our vision is that all are welcome, accepted, achieve and are loved. This vision is for not only our children, our staff and our parent/carer community but also for anyone who visits or chooses to volunteer at our school.

We want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support our children. We also want to encourage parents and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways. However, our overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care. This document sets out our school's policy, which is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as possible, and are provided at the same time with the best possible security.

The school has a variety of adults working on the premises at any one time. They can be categorised as follows:

### **Paid full- or part-time staff employed by the school:**

- teachers;
- teaching assistants;
- SEN assistants;
- caretaker;
- cleaners;
- dinner supervisors;
- school secretaries;

### **Adult workers employed by another organisation:**

- peripatetic music teachers;
- trainee teachers;
- LA advisers and inspectors;
- health visitors;
- grounds maintenance staff;
- contract workers (e.g. an electrician or heating engineer);
- School Improvement Partner [SIP].

### **Volunteer helpers:**

- parents or other adult helpers working alongside teachers;
- students on work experience.

**This policy sets out the arrangements for volunteer helpers only.**

## **Volunteer helpers**

### **Volunteer helpers support the school in a number of ways, including:**

- supporting individual pupils;
- hearing pupils read;
- helping with classroom organisation;
- helping with the supervision of children on school trips;
- helping with group work;
- helping with art or subjects involving other practical activities.

**Volunteer helpers are not allowed to do the following activities:**

- take responsibility for all or some of the whole class;
- change very young children, or supervise them changing;
- supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities;
- take children off the school site without a teacher in charge.

**The responsibility for the health and welfare of the child remains with the class teacher at all times.**

**Signing in**

When helpers arrive in the school, they must sign in at the reception desk. They will be given a visitor's badge, which they should wear at all times. The signing-in sheet will give the date and time of arrival. They must also sign out, stating the time they are leaving, and return their badge before they leave.

**Police checks**

For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have police clearance through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before they work in the school.

The headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes it will not be in the best interests of the children.

**Deployment of classroom helpers**

It is the policy of this school that parent helpers will be asked not to support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child, and perhaps place the class teacher in an uncomfortable situation. Helpers will be asked to support in classes in which there is the most need for individual support.

**Monitoring and review**

The day-to-day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the headteacher, who will report to the governors annually, stating the number of adult volunteer helpers in the school, and summarising their value to the children.

This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every two years, or earlier if considered necessary.

# Volunteer Policy

## 1. Introduction

As an academy it is our aim to involve parents in their children's education and to develop and maintain links with the local community. In order to enrich the lives of the children in Rossington St Michael's C of E Primary School, and to enable us to deliver the curriculum more effectively, we actively encourage the involvement of parents and volunteers from the community in the work of the academy, both during academy hours and in extra-curricular activities.

## 2. Status of volunteers

A volunteer will not be an employee of the academy. He or she will not be engaged on a contract of employment nor on any type of contract for services. The engagement will be binding in honour only, there being no legal agreement between the organisation and the volunteer.

Volunteers are unpaid. The academy is under no obligation to offer or to continue to offer any volunteering opportunity to any person, irrespective of their carrying out volunteering work currently or in the past. Similarly, the volunteer is under no obligation to accept any opportunity offered, and may withdraw from the agreement at any time.

Before accepting the role of volunteer, the individual concerned will agree with the academy that they can fulfil the volunteer role expectations. The academy may withdraw the offer at any time, including after the volunteer has started their engagement. The volunteer may also withdraw from the agreement at any time. Both parties are encouraged to give the other as much notice as possible, should the agreement be brought to an end.

## 3. Recruitment & Selection

The volunteer applicant must complete a simple application form which gives permission to obtain a character reference and a Disclosure and Barring Scheme (DBS) application form (criminal records check), obtainable through the school, see **Natalie Feirn** in the office.

The experience, qualities, skills and needs of any volunteer will be taken into account when deciding about the recruitment of a volunteer in Rossington St Michael's C of E Primary School. Please note, there is no guarantee that a volunteer will be found an immediate placement or any placement at all within the academy or elsewhere.

The placement should be mutually beneficial to the academy and volunteer.

An interview will take place with a view to agreeing a placement in order that the academy and volunteer will have the opportunity to find out about each other and to agree a role, timetable, support, dress code etc. The academy will outline relevant academy policies at the interview.

Any placement of a volunteer shall be of a fixed term such as: 1term/2terms/1 year and shall at the expiry of the period terminate unless expressly renewed in writing. Any placement may however be terminated by the academy at any time without notice if the Head of the academy deems this to be in the best interest of the academy, pupils or staff. Such termination need not involve any fault, shortcoming or wrongdoing attributable to the volunteer.

Rossington St Michael's C of E Primary School has a duty to promote disability and as a part of our actions to do this we will invite local disabled people to volunteer to help within the academy. In order to do this we will contact local community groups to forge links and partnerships.

#### **4. Management of Volunteers**

The academy will ensure that volunteers are given suitable induction training at the beginning of their placement

The volunteer will be given a named contact person who will review the work undertaken by the volunteer and will assist the volunteer generally and, particularly, in the event of any problems occurring.

Regular supervision of the volunteer will be provided as appropriate to the task undertaken and the needs of the volunteer.

The volunteer's role, including status with pupils, will be made clear.

Volunteers will be given opportunities to contribute their ideas and opinions about the work that they are engaged in.

Volunteers will be given guidelines/training regarding child protection issues/procedures, especially pupils disclosing possible abuse.

#### **5. Support to Volunteers**

As an academy, we value the work of volunteers in Rossington St Michaels' C of E Primary School and in order to demonstrate this we aim to:

- Show appreciation for the volunteer's work.
- Ensure volunteers have the appropriate and up-to-date information they need to do their work.
- Ensure that they are introduced to staff and other volunteers and have access to a support network.
- Ensure that they are issued with a staff file/guidelines

#### **6. Confidentiality**

Volunteers will be told that information relating to pupils, parents and staff is confidential and volunteers will maintain confidentiality at all times.

Information about volunteers is also a matter of confidentiality and application forms and personal details must be kept securely by the Head of School and not divulged to others except on a need-to-know basis.

#### **7. Health & Safety Policies**

The academy's policies, including the Health and Safety Policy and Equal Rights Policy, will be explained to volunteers at the outset.

## 8. Insurance

All volunteers should be made aware of the cover provided.

## 9. Expenses

Out-of-pocket expenses will be paid to volunteers and the procedure for claiming these will be explained at the outset.

## 10. The Volunteer

The Volunteer agrees to carry out all reasonable tasks assigned to him/her to the best of their ability and to generally promote the interests of the academy and to abide by the terms and conditions set out in this policy and agreement.

As an academy, we are committed to the rights of the child, the child's safety and emotional wellbeing and the protection of the child from all forms of abuse. In view of this, the academy reserves the right to refuse voluntary help and to terminate or vary a placement at any time without prior notice.

Signed ..... on behalf of the academy. Dated .....

Print name .....

Signed .....on behalf of the volunteer. Dated  
.....

Print name .....

At Rossington St Michael's C of E Primary School we are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. We believe every pupil should be able to participate in all academy activities in an enjoyable and safe environment and be protected from harm. This is the responsibility of every adult employed by or invited to deliver services at Rossington St Michael's C of E Primary School. We recognise our responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all our pupils by protecting them from physical, sexual or emotional abuse, neglect and bullying.



# Volunteer Handbook

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## 1. Welcome

Thank you for your interest in volunteering at our school. We appreciate the help that all our volunteers give in supporting the work of the school.

We want you to enjoy your time with us, and we have produced this guide to make sure you feel comfortable, supported and appreciated. There is a lot of information here, but please don't hesitate to ask questions if you are unsure about anything!

## 2. Our commitment to you

As one of our valued volunteers, we are committed to giving you the following:

- A friendly and supportive working environment
- Enthusiastic and cooperative children
- A link staff member to support you in your volunteering
- Recognition for the work that you do and its impact on learning
- A reference if you apply for paid work here or elsewhere

## 3. Signing in and out

It is important for security and fire regulations that all volunteers working in the school can be identified and located at all times. We ask you to follow this simple routine every time you visit the school:

- Only enter the school via the front entrance.
- Sign the visitors book and make sure you are wearing your visitor's badge.
- Find your link staff member to let them know you have arrived. They will tell you where you will be working.
- When you have finished, please return your badge to the office and sign out.

## 4. Where can I leave my belongings?

It's not a good idea to bring too many personal belongings and valuables to school with you; however, your link staff member will let you know where you can leave your coat and bag, etc. Belonging will be kept within your class store room.

## 5. Where can I go?

Most of the time, you will be working in your link staff member's classroom or shared spaces. If you need to visit other classrooms (for example, to collect children for reading), please be as discreet as possible while lessons are taking place.

At break times, we want you to feel relaxed and comfortable and, therefore, you are welcome to sit in the welcome area and your link staff member will make you a drink. You may also decide to stay within class, again your link staff member will bring you a drink. Due to confidentiality, it is not appropriate to sit within the staffroom.

## 6. Where can I go to the toilet?

There are toilets **by the staff room, opposite the ICT suite or next to the new hall** which you are welcome to use, but please do not use the children's toilets.

## 7. Working with children

Whether you have previous experience of working with children or not, here are some guidelines to help you be successful in your voluntary work:

- Be friendly and encouraging with the pupils, especially when working with them for the first time. Expect them to be a little nervous – introduce yourself and explain that you will be helping them with their reading/spelling, etc.
- Remember that although we need to be friendly, we are not making friendships, and it is important that the pupils give you the same amount of respect as other adults in the school. Expect children to use your 'grown up' name, e.g. Mrs Smith.
- Our pupils are usually enthusiastic and cooperative. You are not responsible for managing their behaviour beyond making a reasonable attempt to help the pupil focus on their task. Be positive and clear in your explanations, and remember you are not there to negotiate about what the pupils have to do.
- If a pupil is overenthusiastic and silly, ask them politely to settle down to help them and others concentrate. If a pupil is not engaging at all with their work, remind them of the purpose of the activity and that you are there to help them.
- If your reasonable attempts to help a pupil engage with their task are not working, use a final reminder, e.g. 'If you can't settle down you will have to go back to see your teacher.'
- Please don't issue punishments. If you have any concerns at all, go and get help from a member of staff immediately.
- When you have finished working with a pupil, it is good to reflect on how the activity has gone. Praise the pupils when they have done well with their learning and attitude; when they haven't, use phrases like 'Next week you should think about...' and 'I think it would help your learning if...' rather than telling the pupil off.
- Remember that the pupils are always watching – it's good to let them see you interacting respectfully and cooperatively with other adults in the school.

For more information, you can read the school's Behaviour Policy. If you are apprehensive about this area, the best advice is to watch members of staff or other adults working with children, even for the first few weeks. If it just isn't working with a particular pupil or group, please let someone know.

## 8. Health and safety

You must comply with the school's Health and Safety Policy (available on the school's website), observing any specific requirements whilst volunteering.

Do not take part in, or ask anyone else to take part in, any action that might cause you or another person to be put at risk of injury or harm. You should always advise your link staff member or the school business manager of any potential hazard or situation that you feel puts people at risk.

If you are involved in an accident whilst volunteering at the school, please seek first aid if required (a list of qualified first aiders is available in all classrooms), and ensure you report the incident to your link staff member or the school office.

## 9. Equal opportunities

At our school, we do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, race, ethnic background, skin colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, history of illness, non-relevant criminal records or marital, employment, financial or social status.

As a volunteer, you must treat people with respect at all times and ensure that there is no unlawful discrimination, abuse, harassment or bullying in your dealing with pupils, colleagues or others at the school.

If you feel that you have been unfairly discriminated against please discuss this with the headteacher. Our Equal Opportunities Policy is available from the office.

## 10. Child protection

Because of the school's duty of care to all pupils and adults in the school, we must ensure that your volunteering does not put anyone at risk.

The school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) is **Philippa Cousins**.

It is possible that pupils may tell you (or try to tell you) things relating to some form of child protection. If this happens, do not question the pupil; let your link staff member know immediately, and allow them to deal with it.

While you cannot promise confidentiality within school (i.e. you must make it clear to the child that you'll have to tell someone), you must ensure that once you have passed the matter on you do not discuss it with anyone else.

**If you are in any doubt about the safety of a child, immediately tell your link staff member or the DSL.**

## 11. Safe practice

To protect the pupils you are working with, and yourself, from any false accusation, follow these simple steps:

- Only work in public areas such as classrooms and corridors.
- Try to work close to where other volunteers or staff members are working.
- Avoid any physical contact with the pupils.
- Try to ensure that your conversation with pupils is friendly but not over-familiar.
- Never accompany pupils into the toilets.

## 12. Confidentiality

The information we hold about you and your volunteering is confidential, and as such, will not be shared with any third parties without your express consent, unless legally required.

We ask that you respect the confidentiality of staff and pupils at our school by not discussing things you have seen and heard whilst volunteering, especially when sensitive information about pupils is involved. We have a Confidentiality Policy located on the school website which you can read if you require more information.

## 13. Insurance

You will be insured for the same activities as teachers. As long as you follow the guidelines in this booklet and in the relevant policies you will be covered by the school's insurance for most occurrences.

## 14. Key contacts

Main school office	<b>01302 868284</b>
Headteacher	<b>Philippa Cousins</b>
School business manager	<b>Natalie Feirn</b>
Assistant Headteachers	<b>Matthew Walker, Helen Price, Steven McArdle</b>
EYFS leader	<b>Angela Noon</b>