

Sibsey Free Primary School

Policy for Volunteer Helpers



Approved by: Governing Body

Date: October 2023

Last Review May 2022

Next review due by: October 2024

When children enter Sibsey Free School, teachers and parents become partners in their care and education. Through complementary roles, mutual support and open communication the bond between home, community and school can greatly enrich a child's general progress and experience of school life. In addition to providing ongoing assistance with, for example, reading and homework with their own children, parents and friends ('Volunteers') are encouraged to become actively involved in the life of the school in many ways, for example, listening to readers, helpers on educational visits and assisting with art and crafts within classrooms. Volunteers are a welcome addition to our school in helping to raise children's achievement and complementing the work of teachers and support staff. It is our hope that such involvement is enjoyable for the volunteers as well as useful to the children and staff.

The Headteacher and Governors 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. The deployment of any volunteer, whether for one day or for a number of sessions over a longer period, will be managed with care; in particular taking account of the needs of the pupils and the staff to whom they are assigned.

The school benefits from volunteers through:

- Celebration of the diversity of skills, knowledge and expertise within our school and wider community.
- Enrichment opportunities within the curriculum through volunteers who advise and support both the staff and pupils.
- Providing regular support in the classroom.
- Providing first-hand experience to support specific topics or curriculum areas.

Volunteer helpers in school include:

- Members of the Governing Body;
- Parents of pupils;
- Members of the 'Friends of Sibsey Free School';
- Ex-pupils;
- Ex-members of staff;
- Students on work experience (a separate Policy also applies);
- University students;
- Local residents;
- Other supporters of the school.

How to volunteer:

People interested in volunteering should contact the school office or the Headteacher. This could be for a one-off event or on a more regular basis. Volunteers should complete the Volunteer Application Form (Appendix 2), and the Volunteer Agreement (Appendix 3) which sets out the school's expectations of its volunteers and confirms that they have received and understand their role.

Volunteers will be given copies of/made aware of:

1. Volunteers Policy
2. Part 1 and 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education, and also Annex B and D
3. Volunteers Code of Conduct/Guidelines for Volunteers (Appendix 1)

Prior to volunteering, the Volunteers Agreement (Appendix 3) and the Code of Conduct for Volunteers (Appendix 5) must be signed by the Volunteer and a copy kept on record by the school.

School Policies

There are certain school policies we expect Volunteers to have read and understood. In addition, there are policies that Volunteers should be aware of. Volunteers should sign to confirm they have read and understood relevant policies. Appendix 4 hereto refers.

Responsibility for Volunteers

The Headteacher retains responsibility for all volunteers in school. However, they will be supported by a named member of staff. All Volunteers will be made aware of the following:

- The name of the member of staff who will be supervising/supporting them.
- They will be directly supervised if they do not hold an Enhanced DBS Certificate with Barred List Check. *At the discretion of the Headteacher, a Volunteer who has not yet received an Enhanced DBS Certificate may be able to act as a volunteer, but will be directly supervised by a member of school staff under a risk assessment and will not engage with any activity with a child/children outside of this direct supervision until the appropriate Certificate has been received.*
- How to deal with inappropriate behaviour of children.
- Expectations regarding confidentiality.
- Expected level of appropriate behaviour and an awareness of professional codes of conduct.
- The school's Complaints procedure.
- Health and Safety Policy – which contains Fire Alarm Procedure.

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

- Supporting individual pupils;
- Listening to 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.

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 (it should be noted that the Class Teacher remains responsible for the overarching supervision and organisation of the class and methods of work).

Volunteer helpers are not allowed to carry out 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.

Without wishing to dissuade or offend those who are enthusiastic and generous with their commitment to school, it is important that we follow procedures that will give confidence to children, parents and staff and to the volunteers themselves.

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.

Disclosure and Barring Service checks:

For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have police clearance through an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check which will include a Barred List Check 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. This requirement will not apply to volunteers who assist in activities such as walking children to a local activity or assisting on a school trip where the volunteer is being directly supervised by other members of staff.

Volunteers' Rights:

School volunteers have the right to:

- Be recognised for their valuable contributions to the educational experience of our children.
- Be assigned worthwhile tasks
- Access any school policies and procedures that are relevant to their roles.
- Any training or supervision that is necessary for the success of their activities.

- Deal with any complaint through the school's formal general complaints procedure.

Insurance:

All Volunteers must ensure that they have signed the Volunteer Indemnity Form. This is available from the School Office.

Whilst volunteering for the school Volunteers are covered by the LA for third party liability only – further details are available from the School Office. Volunteers may wish to make their own arrangements for insuring against theft, personal injury or damage to their own property. Volunteers using their own car to transport children other than their own children to school events, (sport, music etc) should sign the appropriate Indemnity form available from the School Office. Volunteers are advised to check with their car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their own insurance policy conditions.

Allowances:

Although there is no obligation to make financial reimbursement to volunteers, it would be appropriate to consider paying out-of-pocket expenses connected with the tasks they undertake for the school. If school funds will not allow a policy of general reimbursement, consideration could be given to such payments in exceptional circumstances.

Gov.uk guidance indicates that Volunteers can volunteer and claim benefits if:

- the only money the Volunteer gets from volunteering is to cover expenses, such as travel costs
- the Volunteer continues to meet the conditions of the benefit they get.

It may be appropriate for Volunteers to discuss voluntary work with their Personal Advisor to ascertain if this may affect any possible benefits.

Child Protection/Safeguarding

The School maintains a Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy. Volunteers should ensure that they adhere to the relevant sections of this Policy which is available from the School Office, including Part 1 and 5, Annex B and D of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

All volunteers will be asked to undertake annual whole school safeguarding training (and other appropriate training identified, covering a range of safeguarding topics, agreed by the school).

Volunteer Declaration:

To confirm they have received, read, and will observe the requirements of this policy, all Volunteers will be required to sign a form to this effect.

Volunteers also must agree to complete an Enhanced DBS with Barred List Check and must understand that their role within school as a volunteer is conditional upon background checks being successful.

Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse Made Against Persons who work with Children and Young People, and Policy for Confidentiality and Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing)

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation. If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They should not discuss them with pupils or parents.

The attention of Volunteers is also drawn to the above Policies which are available on the school's website or from the School Office. These Policies aim to lay down the procedures that should be followed if anyone has concerns about the actions of another member of staff (paid or volunteer). If a Volunteer has any such concerns, they should report the matter to the Headteacher, and/or follow the guidance in the Confidential Reporting Policy if appropriate.

The Policies also give details on the procedures to be followed when dealing with any allegations of abuse made against staff or volunteers.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

At Sibsey Free Primary School we aim to ensure that no member of the school community experiences harassment, less favourable treatment or discrimination within the learning environment as a result of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, or sex.

We value the diversity of individuals within our school and do not discriminate against anyone because of 'differences'. We believe that all our children matter and we value their families too. We give our children every opportunity to achieve their best by taking account of our children's range of life experiences when devising and implementing school policies and procedures.

Monitoring and review:

The day-to-day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher. Governors will be made aware of the adult volunteer helpers in the school, and their value to the children.

Review

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

October 2022

Appendix 1

Code of Conduct/Guidelines for Volunteers:

While helping in school, volunteers are entitled to be treated with the respect and in a manner appropriate to a member of staff. Children are told to refer to volunteers as Mr. Ms or Mrs rather than by first names. To this end, volunteers will be issued with lanyards that identify them as a Visitor in the school.

Volunteers are expected to work and behave in such a way as to promote the school's aims and educational purposes, and:

- Demonstrate their support for education and give their full attention to the task in hand. (For this reason, volunteers should not bring children with them to school unless as part of the group with which they are working. Parents who volunteer outside school hours may at times find it necessary to bring siblings to school. At these times, those children must be under the parents' direct supervision. The parents are responsible for their own children's safety and must keep the children with them at all times.)
- Treat what they see and hear in school as confidential. (Working with other people's children is a privilege with responsibilities. Children observed in the classroom or the school should not be discussed outside, even with that child's parents. Questions relating to individual children should be addressed to the child's teacher or the Head. Volunteers would not normally have access to children's records. An exception might be relevant medical information.)
- Arrive on time and be ready to start the agreed task. (At Sibsey we rely on volunteers to support much that is important in the life of the school and its children. It is important that volunteers are available for the duration of the task. If they must cancel, the volunteer is asked to call the office as soon as possible to allow time to find a replacement.)
- Leave matters of discipline to the teacher with responsibility. (Volunteers may address behaviour or safety issues if the teacher is temporarily unavailable. The volunteer should inform the teacher as soon as possible.)
- Accept direction and supervision. (Volunteers are not intended to take the place of staff but to provide assistance and enrichment. They should be consistent with the teacher in supporting the school's ethos and behaviour. Volunteers should, therefore, agree to operate under the direction of the staff.)
- Clearly communicate interests and expectations.
- Present a positive role model. (Volunteers should be patient, flexible, appreciative, respectful, and considerate, particularly in their dealings with children.)
- Adhere to the school's Health and Safety policy.
- Adhere to the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding policy. If a child makes a disclosure that is of concern to a Volunteer, that Volunteer

should speak to the School's Designated Person (Headteacher) as soon as possible.

- If you see or hear anything that concerns you, please report it directly to the class teacher or to the Headteacher.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate for a professional working in a primary school.
- Refrain from inappropriate language or topics of conversation.
- Whenever possible, avoid physical contact with children.
- Adhere to the school's non-smoking policy. This includes school visits.
- Switch off mobile phones inside the school building or any venue for an educational visit. (Arrangements can be made to deal with any essential call.) Mobile phones or personal cameras must never be used to take images of children whether in school or out on a school trip.
- If any child is discourteous, please refer this to the class teacher.
- The school appreciates feedback regarding your experience as a volunteer.
- Many of the above are there not only for the protection of our children, but also for the protection of the volunteer. A serious breach of any of these standards might lead to a volunteer being removed from their post, and any future volunteering roles.

Appendix 2

Sibsey Free Primary School

Volunteer Application Form

Full name of Volunteer:

Address:

Home telephone number:

Mobile telephone number:

What activities/areas of the school's work would you like to help with?

Are there any particular age groups/classes you would like to work with?

Do you have any disabilities or other needs we need to take into account, or adjustments we need to make, to enable you to work as a volunteer in school?

(Please give details)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this application form. Please hand it to the school office, marked for the attention of the Headteacher.

Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we will be in touch as soon as possible.

Appendix 3

Sibsey Free Primary School

Volunteer Agreement

Thank you for offering your services as a volunteer at our school. Your offer of help is greatly appreciated and we hope you will enjoy the experience.

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement and hand it in to the school office.

I have been accepted as a volunteer at Sibsey Free Primary School and I confirm the following:

- I understand and accept the school's Volunteer Policy, including the Code of Conduct/Guidelines for volunteers.
- I agree to support the school's aims and educational purposes.
- I agree to adhere to the school's policies and procedures at all times.
- I agree to work within the boundaries of the school's Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy at all times.
- I have read and understood Part 1 and 5, Annex B and D of Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- I agree to treat any information obtained from within school with the strictest of confidence.
- I agree to undertake checking under the Enhanced DBS procedure with Barred List Check.
- I am aware that the school's policies and procedures are available on the school website, or available upon request from the school office.

Signed:

Print Name in full:

Date:

Appendix 4

POLICIES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Thank you for acting as a Volunteer in Sibsey Free School. As part of your volunteering role, we would ask that you consider the following documents, and be prepared to sign to confirm that you have read and understood the contents:

- Department of Education Publication – Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and 5, Annex B and D.
- Policy: Child Protection/Safeguarding
- Policy: Confidentiality and Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing)
- Policy: Volunteers (which includes Volunteers Code of Conduct and Volunteers Agreement)

The following policies are also relevant for your role, and we would ask that you also familiarise yourself with the contents of them:

- Procedure for Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against persons who work with children and young people
- Anti-Bullying
- Behaviour
- Positive Handling
- Data Protection
- Equality and Diversity
- Guidance for Safer Working Practices
- Health & Safety
- Online Safety (including Acceptable Use and Social Media)
- First Aid Policy/Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy
- Complaints Procedure

Access to all Documents/Policies is available by:

- Email (Policies can be emailed to you)
- School website
- Paper copies are available upon request.



Appendix 5

Aide memoire for all volunteers on conduct at Sibsey

When we speak to others we will:

- speak respectfully to adults at all times, even if we disagree with them using the mantra “*speak to those as you would wish to be spoken to yourself*”
- use positive statements so that children can learn what we expect of them in any situation

As professionals we will:

- maintain appropriate confidentiality about anything that we see or hear in the school, so that parents and children can trust us, and as a way of showing respect to our fellow professionals
- work as part of a team, contributing as well as learning from others and helping to build up a strong workforce so that we can provide the best possible learning opportunities for the children
- work within the school’s policies and practices, so that what we do is consistent with what has been agreed between all members of the staff and the governors
- avoid workplace gossip/negativity as it becomes a roadblock to effective communication and teamwork. Communication should take place using the right channels
- behave in a positive way despite any personal problems that we may have, especially in front of the children
- dress appropriately, so that we set a good example for the children and to show that we are here to work
- aim to understand both sides of a situation

Review Date: September 2023

Code of Conduct for Volunteers

I confirm that I have read and understood the school’s code of conduct:

Signed:

Print name:

Date:

Sibsey Free School

- Department of Education Publication – Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1 and 5, and Annex B
- Policy: Child Protection/Safeguarding
- Policy: Confidentiality and Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing)
- Policy: Volunteers

I confirm I have read and understood the content of the above documents.

Print Name	Signature	Date