



Policy on Adult Volunteer Helpers

“My God is my strength in whom I trust.” – Psalm 18.2

1 Introduction

1.1 As a Christian School with strong Christian values we want our school to be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children. We also want to encourage parents and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways. Therefore, volunteer helpers are warmly welcomed to help in school at mutually agreed times. 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.

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

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

- teachers;
- teaching assistants;
- the premises officer;
- cleaners;
- dinner supervisors;
- school secretaries;
- Instructors/ Coaches eg NWLSSP coaches
- ICT consultant/technician;

1.4 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 Consultants.
- SEN support staff eg Speech and Language Therapist, Educational Psychologist
- Visiting staff from other schools

1.5 Volunteer helpers:

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

This policy sets out the arrangements for volunteer helpers only.

2 Volunteer helpers

2.1 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.
- helping with the school library
- organising fund raising activities
- helping with special events eg sports day, Christmas parties, creative time etc

2.2 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 or without permission.

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

3 Security

For security reasons, volunteers should use the front door and sign 'In' (and later, when leaving, 'Out') in the signing in folder in the entrance hall. This enables us to know who is on the premises in case of fire or other emergency. We will issue parents with a 'Parent Helper' badge. Please wear it where it can be seen, as it shows that you are authorised to be in the building. Badges should be returned at the end of a session before the volunteer leaves.

4 Safeguarding and Safeguarding checks

4.1 For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers who work in school on a regular basis are required to have a criminal record check by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before they work in the school. (Volunteers who are working in school on a one-off occasion do not require a DBS check but will be supervised by school staff at all times and must not work with pupils on their own)

4.2 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.

4.3 All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities.

**Senior Designated Person: Mrs Carol Price (Head Teacher) or in her absence,
Deputy Designated Person: Mrs Frances Rogers (Senior Teacher)**

All staff and helpers in school have a responsibility to report any concerns they have or any disclosures that are made to them to the designated Person. If their concern is about a member of staff then they should also refer this to the Senior Designated Person. If the concern is regarding the Headteacher then the person should report their concern to Mrs Lesley Birtwistle. (Chair of Governors).

5 Deployment and Supervision of classroom helpers

5.1 At the beginning of each academic year the school asks parents to complete a proforma asking parents if they are able to offer any help, when they might be available and where they would be interested in working in school. The Headteacher and Staff jointly use this information to allocate where volunteer helpers will work. Staff retain the proformas so that these can be referred to where parents have offered support with outside visits and extra-curricular activities.

Sometimes we will ask for volunteers to help with a specific one-off job/ activity via the regular newsletter or letters home.

5.2 Adults helping in school with the children are always under the supervision of the class

teacher, who will explain the task, what is required of the children and the helper's role within that setting. Regular helpers will rapidly learn individual practices, but policy documents are available to give a deeper understanding of our methods and ideas. **Guidelines for adult helpers are attached to this policy. (Parent Helper Guidelines)**

5.3 All parents who help on a regular basis in school are provided with a copy of our Policy for Adult Volunteer Helpers and asked to sign a copy of the "Parent Helper Guidelines". They are also asked to give consent to a full check being carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

6 Working in a class with your own child

It is not always possible to allocate parent helpers to their child's own class for a variety of reasons – some year groups are very popular, for some children it can be very distracting and perhaps places the class teacher in an uncomfortable situation.

Parent helpers are asked to be aware that their presence in the same classroom as their child can sometimes cause adverse reactions and to consider carefully the beneficial results of helping in a different classroom.

The staff reserve the right to make this request if at any time they feel that difficulties are arising.

6.1 Parent helpers should treat their child as they would treat the rest of the class. Any problems or issues that arise should be dealt with by a member of staff.

7 Staff Responsibilities

In accordance with this policy, we welcome involvement in school life by parents and other interested members of the community. The following procedures for staff should ensure that there is clarity as regards the roles and responsibilities of all involved, being mindful of Safeguarding Procedures.

7.1 Before approaching a potential helper or accepting an offer of help, the teacher should consider the effect that having the helper in class will have on the children; this is particularly important if the helper has their own child in the class.

7.2 Prior to a helper starting volunteering they will meet with a member of staff and be given a copy of our guidelines. The member of staff will talk them through the guidelines, discussing and answering any queries. The helper will be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that they have read and agree to work within the guidelines laid down, particularly regarding confidentiality. A copy of this will be kept in school and a copy given to the parent helper.

7.3 A helper will be shown round the school, the staffroom, toilets, and break/lunch times will be explained. The helper will have the fire procedures and first aid procedures explained to them.

7.4 A helper may be assigned a task with or without children within the school. If with children, the teacher will ensure that the group is of a manageable size. The teacher will ensure that the assigned task is appropriate for the helper to carry out:

- That the helper has the appropriate skills and has been given guidance on carrying out the task.
- Support of group work should generally be after children have received teaching input from the teacher.
- Helpers should be encouraged to give feedback to the children, although it is the teacher's responsibility to mark any work beyond basic spelling and times table tests.
- It is not appropriate for helpers to scrutinise books to compare how well their own child is doing in comparison to other pupils or to comment on work in books to any other parents.

7.5 The teacher will explain any given task, being clear as to what is expected of the helper e.g. supervising a craft activity, tidying up at the end of the activity etc.

7.6 Children will be expected to behave with courtesy and politeness and the teacher retains responsibility for discipline. The teacher will explain to the helper what the expectations of children's behaviour is, including the classroom code of conduct.

7.7 A helper may be asked to do preparatory/secretarial type duties out of the classroom. Such activities would usually be undertaken alone or with another helper, again the teacher will carefully explain what is required.

7.8 At the end of a session involving a helper the teacher will express thanks on behalf of the school.

7.9 A helper may only be left alone with a group of children or a single child if they have completed a Disclosure Check.

8 Confidentiality

Adult helpers are welcomed into the staffroom at breaktimes to enjoy a drink and a chance to relax, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed here and to exercise discretion. We also ask that confidentiality be maintained in respect of the children's attainments, attitudes and behaviour and any matters relating to staff whilst operating in school as a helper.

The school has a **Confidentiality Policy** and all staff, students and volunteers are expected to comply to it.

Any matter that is of concern should be discussed with the Headteacher immediately in order for any misunderstandings or difficulties to be addressed as a matter of

urgency.

9 Health and Safety

Helpers are subject to the school's Health & Safety regulations and are welcome to read the Health & Safety Policy and Emergency plan. First Aid must only be carried out by a qualified member of staff. In school there are very firm guidelines about what can be given to or done for children and who is entitled to do it.

10 Fire Procedures

The fire alarm is a continuously ringing bell. When it sounds, the teacher will lead the children from the room in silence through the designated exit. If you are working with a small group in another part of the school, make sure that all the children are there, and then take them out by the nearest fire exit and into the playground. Do not let them go back to their classroom for personal belongings. Take the children to join the rest of their class and tell the teacher that you are there.

11 Monitoring and review

The day-to-day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the headteacher
This policy will be reviewed by the governing body every three years, or earlier if considered necessary.

Signed:

Date:



Packington Church of England Primary School

Parent Helper Guidelines

“My God is my strength in whom I trust.” – Psalm 18.2

- Aims:**
- To give clear guidelines on the ways in which Parents can help in school.**
 - To ensure good communication between Teachers and Parent helpers.**
 - To provide a framework for the operation of the helper system.**
 - To ensure confidentiality.**

Packington Church of England Primary School has a distinctive Christian ethos which is at the centre of school life. We provide an inclusive, supportive and caring environment, shaped by Christian values in which children can learn and flourish. We welcome help from all members of the community without reference to ability or aptitude, and irrespective of whether they are of the Christian faith, another faith or no faith, but we expect parents to respect the Christian ethos of our school.

THANK YOU

The first thing to say is how much we value and appreciate the help of parents at Packington. We welcome their help with many different aspects of the life of the school, from reading with children and supporting group work, to preparing resources and helping with school trips. Parents are one of the biggest groups of people who give freely of their time to help the school deliver to the pupils an education of the highest standard. Some are able to help regularly and others can only spare time now and then. These guidelines have been written to help provide current and prospective parent helpers with expectations and information on school procedures. Hopefully it will help make the voluntary work both enjoyable and valuable to both the helper and the children. It also sets out the expectations of the school staff.

All Parents who help on a regular basis in school are provided with a copy of our Policy for Adult Volunteer Helpers and are asked to sign a copy of the “Parent Helper Guidelines”. They are also asked to give consent to a full check being carried out by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

SAFEGUARDING

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. There are, however, key people within schools and the LA who have specific responsibilities.

**Senior Designated Person: Mrs Carol Price (Head Teacher) or in her absence,
Deputy Designated Person: Mrs Frances Rogers (Senior Teacher)**

All staff and helpers in school have a responsibility to report any concerns they have or any disclosures that are made to them to the Designated Person. If their concern is about a member of staff then they should also refer this to the Senior Designated Person. If the concern is regarding the Headteacher then the person should report their concern to Mrs Lesley Birtwistle. (Acting Chair of Governors).

The following guidelines support the attached Policy for Adult Volunteer Helpers and are intended to help you feel comfortable and informed of expectations.

So, thank you for your offer to help. We welcome parents and other adult helpers into our school to assist in a variety of ways. We recognise the importance of you as part of our home/school partnership, our role in the community and our overall school ethos. We try to ensure that at all times you are engaged in activities that are meaningful and appropriate and that you are fully aware of the school's expectations. We would like you to feel confident about helping and we realise that you may have many questions to ask. We will be happy to give you any guidance you require. In order to ensure that adults helping in school do so in a safe environment we ask them to be aware of the following:

- Arrange your time in the classroom with the teacher in advance— it is helpful if you can also agree what you feel able to help with (there are lots of different ways we can use your expertise to support the children's learning).
- Please arrive promptly at the agreed time. Sign in and collect a parent helper badge from the office. (These will need returning when you sign out at the end of your session – each badge is numbered to help us keep track of them.)
- If you are unsure of what you have been asked to do, please check immediately— either with the teacher or the Teaching Assistant.
- You should never be left in the classroom with a large group of children on your own. If you have had a DBS check you may be asked to work with a group or individual child in an area outside the classroom.
- We have to follow very careful guidelines on aspects of physical contact with children.
 1. Please remember not to initiate contact with children – let them take the lead, but discourage over-familiarity.
 2. If a child asks to go to the toilet, refer them to the class teacher rather than give them permission. Do not take them yourself.
 3. Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.
 4. If you are helping dress/undress for PE etc., encourage the child to do as much as possible for themselves e.g. helping with a difficult button or zip is acceptable. Never undress a child. Do not physically help unless another adult is in the room.
 5. No adult in school is permitted to remove/insert ear-rings.
- Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
- Children will sometimes “push the boundaries” with a helping Parent. If a little reminder does not elicit an immediate improvement, please refer to the teacher or Teaching Assistant who will follow our Behaviour Policy. Parents should not sanction pupils.
- Please be aware that your presence in the classroom may well affect your child's behaviour in all sorts of ways. Prepare your child for the experience by explaining in advance that you will be in the class to help all the children, the teacher is in charge and you have to do what the teacher has asked you as well. Occasionally children become a little unsettled when their parents are working with other children in the classroom. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class and settle down after a few weeks. If this does not happen we may ask you to help in a different class for a while. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion
- Although we understand that parents can find it upsetting if there are any issues that concern their own child when working in a class; parent helpers should treat their child as they would treat the rest of the class. Parent helpers should not attempt to solve any issues but must pass these on to school staff to sort out.
- Whilst you are in the classroom you will sometimes see children being disciplined. However sorry you feel for them, please do not give them any comfort or support. You will not always be aware of what has happened previously, or the warnings that have been given or what strategies are being used to support particular children.
- We have well defined procedures for informing parents of what has happened whilst the children are in school and we will be the first to discuss any issues where we have

concerns. Parent helpers must not relay anything you have seen or heard in a classroom or school to other parents. We need to be assured that you will exercise total discretion in all respects when you are helping in school. Even a comment such as, 'Your Jimmy reads well' is not acceptable as others may wonder why you have not said that to them. It is very important to treat anything you hear or see in school with regard to particular children as being in absolute confidence and entirely a matter within school.

- Similarly, you may find that parents who are friends will ask about their progression or behaviour in school. Again, this is a matter requiring a great deal of tact on your part and it is important that you firmly suggest that if they are worried they should discuss the matter themselves with the class teacher. You should not promise to keep a 'special eye' on particular children.
- If you have any concerns at any time about the way a child has been treated, or any aspect of classroom practice, please raise the issue immediately with the Headteacher.
- Helping in the classroom means that you are privy to "inside information", especially when staff are talking together. Please exercise the utmost discretion in all respects.
- Adult helpers are welcomed into the staff room at break times to enjoy a drink and a chance to relax, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed there and to exercise discretion. We also ask that confidentiality be maintained in respect of children's:
 - attainments
 - attitudes
 - behaviourwhilst operating in school as a helper
- All information about individual children is private and should only be shared with staff.
- Any Information about pupils or staff should not be passed on indiscriminately or talked about outside of school.
- Parents should not have access to any other child's books, marks and progress grades.
- Please refer any first aid issues to a member of staff.
- Occasionally in school you will become aware of information about children which is confidential or private to the child or family. This is a delicate matter that requires a great deal of tact on your part. Any information that leads you to believe a child is at risk should be mentioned to the head teacher or a Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Rogers or Mrs Dyche). Details can also be found in all the adult toilets. Any conversation with parents outside of school is a breach of the school's confidence and you may put a child at a serious risk of harm.
- **If a child does or tells you something that causes you concern you must tell the class teacher or Headteacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.**
- The welfare of the children is paramount so in the unlikely event that the policy/guidelines are not followed or that other concerns are raised and substantiated the school reserves the right, following discussions, to prevent further voluntary work at the school.

Declaration

- **I agree to follow the guidelines above**
- **I am willing to have/have had a full DBS check by the school**
- **I agree to receiving a safeguarding briefing from the designated safeguarding member of staff.**

Signed:

Date: