



Adopted by Performance and Standards Committee 8th March 2010

Isleham C of E Primary Policy for Volunteers in School

Rationale

When children are enrolled at Isleham C of E Primary 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 Isleham.

Without wishing to dissuade or offend those who would like to become Volunteers here at school, it is important that we follow procedures that will give confidence to children, parents and staff and to the volunteers themselves.

This policy has been written to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

At Isleham C of E Primary School a volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory completion of the procedures set out below, either (i) assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or (ii) is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips or residential activities; or to undertake coaching in sports activities.

Recruitment of Volunteers

There are many opportunities for people to become involved with school and individuals may wish to be generally available, or to offer their assistance with a particular age group or task.

Some children are not ready to have their parents assisting the teacher in their own classroom as it may be difficult to adjust to a different relationship. In these cases, it is better for the parent to volunteer to work in another area of the school.

All volunteers follow the same procedures and a list is held in school of those people who:

- have applied to be volunteers;
- who have completed the necessary paperwork ; and
- who have been vetted by CRB and criminal records procedures.

People are encouraged to volunteer at any time and application forms are readily available from the office. Parents or friends of the school may be asked to help when a particular need arises but an appeal for volunteers is made annually to allow time for clearance by CRB.

Deployment

During a visit to the school each volunteer should be designated to a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. It is essential that the volunteer is clear as to which member of staff has this responsibility.

All volunteers need to be made to feel welcome. It is important that the parameters of their role within the school are clearly defined from the outset in order to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding. Volunteers should be given access to any school policies and procedures that are relevant to their roles; any support or supervision that is necessary for the success of their activities.

- a) 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 a member of staff, ie they must not be asked to cover the absence of staff from school;
 - Would normally be performed by a contractor engaged by the LEA or by the school;
 - Require them to have unsupervised access to children;
 - It should be noted that the classteacher remains responsible for the organisation of the class and methods of work.
- b) Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the current need of the school, the offer of help should be declined.

Code of Conduct

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 badges that identify them as volunteers at Isleham C of E Primary School.

Volunteers at Isleham are expected to:

- 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).
- 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 headteacher. 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 (Isleham relies 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 all 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 Isleham 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 Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policies;
- adhere to the school's Physical Intervention Policy;
- dress in a manner that is appropriate for professional working in a primary school;
- refrain from inappropriate language or topics of conversation;
- adhere to the school's no smoking policy; and
- 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.)

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a Volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher for investigation. Any complaints made by a Volunteer will be referred to the Headteacher / Deputy Headteacher.

The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a Volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another Class;
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them. The full Complaints Procedure is set out in the School Handbook (available from the School Office).

Monitoring and Review

This Policy has been approved by the Governing Body and will be reviewed annually and updated in the light of new guidance from either the DfES or LEA.