



# **Thistly Meadow Primary School**

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

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### Introduction

Volunteers at Thistly Meadow Primary School bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children at the school. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community.

Our Volunteers include:

- Parents and relatives of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Local residents
- Friends of the school

The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged include:

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities with children
- Accompanying school visits

### Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one off event such as a school visit, or on a more regular basis, e.g. hearing children read, should approach the School Business Manager (SBM) directly to discuss their availability and their skills.

### Volunteer Induction

All volunteers in school will receive induction from the SBM who manages volunteers in school.

The Code of Conduct, Safeguarding and other policies are issued, expectations and procedures are made clear and guidelines are given.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or in their absence, the Deputy (DDSL) will carry out Safeguarding induction. The induction will be the same for volunteers as it is for new staff.

### Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher in a professional manner and not with the parents of the child/persons outside school.

Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school. Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Head teacher or the SBM.

### **Supervision**

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice/guidance from the teacher in the event of any query regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

### **Health & Safety**

The school has a Health and Safety Policy and this is provided to Volunteers as part of their induction. Induction will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using Design Technology equipment/accompanying children on visits). Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher/Head teacher.

### **Child Protection**

The welfare of our children is paramount. To ensure the safety of our children, we adopt the following procedures:

- All Volunteers are given a copy of the Volunteer Policy.
- To ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all of our volunteers must undertake a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check.\*
- All Volunteers will apply to the school and the school will carry out Safer Recruitment procedures including 2 relevant references\*, before a volunteer place is offered.

\*Where a volunteer is engaged in a 'one-off' activity e.g. helping supervise a group of children as part of a class visit, no formal checks are carried out on these volunteers. The Class Teacher will ensure that these volunteers are kept under **constant supervision** of school staff. Such Volunteers will be restricted to Parent volunteers only.

### **Complaints Procedure**

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Head teacher or SBM for investigation. The Head teacher reserves the right to take the following action:

- To speak with a volunteer about a breach of the Code of Conduct.

- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity in another class.
- Inform the volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them.

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