



# **THE BISHOPSWOOD SCHOOLS FEDERATION**

## **VOLUNTEER POLICY**

Volunteers at our schools bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of children. We welcome and encourage volunteers from the local community. A volunteer is an unpaid adult who provides support to our schools.

### **Our volunteers include:**

- Members of the governing body
- Parents of pupils
- University students
- Ex members of staff
- Local residents

### **The types of activities that volunteers are engaged in might include:**

- Hearing children read
- Working with small groups of children
- Working with individual children
- Undertaking arts and craft activities with children
- Supporting teachers to run after school clubs
- Accompanying school visits

### **Becoming a volunteer**

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one off event or on a more regular basis should approach their child's class teacher, the Deputy Headteacher or the Executive Headteacher.

Before starting in school and to ensure the safety of our pupils at all times, all volunteers will be required to complete an Hampshire approved application form, along with a DBS check and further pre-employment checks. Forms can be obtained from the school office. We are unable to have any volunteer in school regularly unless they have been cleared by the Disclosure and Barring Service and show their certificate to school staff. The copy of this certificate will be taken and kept in school.

### **Guidance**

Volunteers may be asked to work across a year group. This may mean that they sometimes work in their child's class and at other times may be asked to work in an adjacent class. If children find it distracting when their parents are in school arrangements may need to be made for support to take place in another area in the school.

Each day before reporting to the class, volunteers should sign in at the school office and obtain a visitor's badge. This is a sign of visitor recognition that must be worn at all times. When leaving the school, volunteers must ensure that they sign out and return the visitor's badge. A member of staff will offer refreshments at morning break.

### **Confidentiality**

All staff members, voluntary helpers and visitors should be aware that information relating to individual children or members of staff is totally confidential. Whilst in school volunteers may hear conversations which are of a confidential nature. These cover aspects such as children's academic progress, misbehaviour, or home circumstances. All information relating to individual children and staff is totally confidential and volunteers must respect this. Please see our Confidentiality Policy for further information. (available on the school's website or from the school office)

### **Issues affecting children**

Any concerns that volunteers have about the children they work with/come into contact with should be shared with the class teacher and NOT shared with the parents of the child or any persons outside of school. These comments, particularly if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of the child if not heard directly from the school. A situation may arise in school, where the duty to the child is greater than that to the parent.

### **Issues affecting adults in school**

All adults in our schools can expect their personal and health issues to remain confidential unless:

- it impinges on their terms of contract;
- it endangers pupils or other members of staff;
- there is a legal obligation to disclose such information;
- it is necessary for legal proceedings;
- despite the duty of confidence the interest of the individual or the wider public interest justifies disclosure.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Executive Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher.

### **Child Protection**

If a child discloses something, this information should be shared promptly with the child's teacher, Executive Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher. The Executive Headteacher and Deputy Headteachers are the DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads) for our school. We cannot offer unconditional confidentiality when a child discloses something, however, reassurance can be given that the best interests of the child will be maintained. Please read our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies for further information regarding the school's safeguarding practices and procedures. (available on the school's website or from the school office)

### **Supervision**

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher to whom they are assigned. Although teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, this does not require volunteers to be in their direct supervision at all times. Volunteers should feel confident to carry out the task they have been assigned and should seek further advice/

guidance from the teacher in the event of a query or problem regarding a child's behaviour or understanding of a task.

### **Health and Safety**

The school has a health and safety policy which is available on request. Class teachers should ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using cookery equipment). If a volunteer attends a school trip, their emergency contact details will be requested. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher, Deputy Headteacher or Executive Headteacher.

**Policy Reviewed** – November 2019

**Next Review** – May 2021

## **Complaints Procedure**

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

The school has the right to take the following actions:

- Speak with the volunteer about a breach in the volunteer agreement
- Offer an alternative placement for a volunteer
- Inform the volunteer that they are no longer required to help in school

This policy should be read alongside the following policies:

- Confidentiality
- Child Protection
- Safeguarding
- Complaints
- Healthy & Safety
- Offsite Visits (if applicable to role)

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in the light of new guidance from either the DfE or the LA.

**Policy Reviewed** – July 2019

**Next Review** – July 2021