

Volunteer Policy

Date agreed by Governors:

Review date: September 2017

Governor signature: _____

Date of next Review: September 2018

The Head Teacher and Governing Body with the Designated Safeguarding Lead will monitor the safeguarding practice of the school to ensure that this policy is understood and being operated effectively in practice.

General Introduction:

This policy supports the work of the school in promoting its mission statement, aims and values.

Mission statement:

St Michael's CE Primary and Pre School endeavours to provide a happy, safe, caring and stimulating learning environment, based on Christian principles in which all members of the school community are valued as individuals and are encouraged to reach their full potential.

School aims:

At St Michael's we value every member of our school community and our aims are for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Develop their understanding of the value of leading a healthy lifestyle
- Work and play in a secure and safe environment in which they are encouraged to develop moral values and mutual respect
- Experience an exciting curriculum which fosters their enthusiasm, develops an enquiring mind and enables every child to achieve his/her full potential
- Access an education for life which promotes British Values that enable all learners to become effective and reliable members of the wider community
- Foster ambition and expectation to carry through to adult life
- To achieve these aims all learners, staff, parents and governors will work together to promote our core values of peace, courage and respect.

Volunteer Policy

1. Definition of a volunteer

Volunteers can be divided into 2 groups, either 'occasional' or 'regular'.

- Occasional can be defined as volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and children on one off outings or trips that do not involve over-night stays, or who only help at specific one-off events e.g. a sports day, school fete. It would be expected that occasional volunteers would be supervised by a 'regulated' member of staff e.g. teacher and would not be left unsupervised.
- Regular volunteers can be defined as those who help 3 or more times in a 30 day period, once a month or more or on an overnight stay. If regular volunteers are unsupervised the school will require an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check (See appendix 1).

2. Recruitment of volunteers

- Occasional volunteers would usually be parents or carers who come in to help on a one off outing or occasion and would not be recruited as such to the position of volunteer. They would not be required to go through a recruitment process including the taking up of DBS checks. This would be at the Head teacher's discretion and where there are known concerns about a parent or other occasional volunteer it would be at the Head teacher's discretion not to engage this person as an occasional volunteer.
- Regular volunteers would be in a position of trust within the school and even where they are not left unsupervised with children, should always go through a recruitment process. The school should also take into consideration any knowledge they have of the person in their relationship with the school as a parent, grand-parent, previous employee, governor, committee member etc. when deciding if this person will be trustworthy and make a valuable contribution to the school in the capacity of volunteer.

The recruitment process should include

- DBS checks for all and a barred list check where volunteers have unsupervised access to children and young people.
- Informal Interview with Head teacher or nominated senior member of staff to include discussion about previous work or contact with children, safeguarding and advise of the school's safeguarding policy.
- 2 references (one of which should, where possible, include their most recent paid and/or voluntary work with children/young people).
- A conversation with the person who last 'employed' a prospective volunteer – either as a volunteer, or in a paid capacity.
- Completion of a volunteer recruitment form which includes personal details, background, skills, types of activities they would like to help in, times they are available.
- Where volunteers have been recruited by another organisation and work in an educational establishment, e.g. sports coaches from a local club or early-years activity provider, the establishment should obtain assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted.

3. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check

DBS Checks are checks carried out to identify whether or not individuals working in an unsupervised activity with children are suitable to do so. This is because it is known that a small minority of people use this route to gain the confidence of children before causing them harm.

See Appendix 1 for KCSIE guidance.

Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent an individual from being a volunteer. The Head teacher and Governing Body would consider the details of the criminal record and balance this against the activities the individual is to undertake. Advice may be required from HR services in order to make this decision.

If a volunteer commits a criminal offence during their time as a volunteer they must disclose this to the Head teacher in the same way that any employed member of staff should. The Head teacher will assess whether it is acceptable to continue with the volunteering role, whether the activities should be changed, or whether it is the best interests for all concerned to no longer act as a volunteer. HR advice may be required.

4. Information for volunteers

As part of an induction process volunteers should be given verbal and written information about the school. This would include;

- Volunteer agreement with terms and conditions to sign which would include confidentiality
- School expectations of volunteers
- What a volunteer can expect from the school
- School vision, aims and values
- Health and safety issues e.g. what to do if there is a fire, site/premises security
- Code of conduct e.g. polite, courteous, self-disciplined, respectful, being an appropriate role model, language, dress, rules around smoking, alcohol and illegal substances
- Safeguarding policy, practices and responsibilities
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 (including flowchart)
- Equality policy
- School Behaviour policy and Anti bullying policy
- E Safety Policy and Acceptable User Policy (where appropriate)
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people

5. Safeguarding issues

- Volunteers should be supervised by a designated member of staff. They should be working in a setting where there is always a paid member of staff present. Even where DBS checks have been undertaken, volunteers should not be left unsupervised for long periods.
- Occasional volunteers should never be left unsupervised, would not take children to the toilet or be left in charge of a small group of children on an outing away from teacher/teaching assistant/staff member supervision.
- Volunteers must be advised about physical contact with children in the same way as employed staff.
- Volunteers should use the staff toilets and staff room for any breaks rather than using the children's toilets or play areas unless separate toilets are not available.
- Volunteers must be advised that if a child discloses any information relating to potential abuse that they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/designated safeguarding lead immediately.

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- All volunteers should be given a basic safeguarding briefing by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may also be appropriate for volunteers to attend any staff training sessions on safeguarding.

6. Discipline of Children

- Volunteers should be made aware of the behaviour management policy of the school.
- Volunteers must be advised that it is not their role to discipline children.
- If a potential discipline situation occurs, even where this involves their own child, they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/staff member to resolve or if it has been dealt with at the time, as soon as possible after the incident.
- They must be advised that at no time should they shout, hit or threaten a child or adult.
- Volunteers should be advised of the anti-bullying policy and bring any situations of conflict or bullying to the attention of the teacher/staff member.

7. Confidentiality

- Volunteers must be advised that all information about the children is confidential and must not be discussed outside of the school or with children, parents or other visitors to the school.
- They should not have access to school's records, children's personal details etc.
- Any information should be shared on a 'need to know' basis e.g. child's medical condition such as diabetes, ADHD where this may effect their behaviour or well-being.
- Volunteers would not usually attend staff meetings but there may be exceptions on a 'need to know' basis.
- The volunteer must not take any notes/files about children outside of the school.
- At no time should volunteers be permitted to take photographs, films or recordings of children unless on school equipment and requested to do so by a regulated member of staff.
- Volunteers should be referred to the relevant school policy on the taking, storage and disposal of images of children.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal hand held electronic devices should not be brought into the classroom.

8. Health and safety issues

- Volunteers must be aware of health and safety policies and procedures that are relevant and be advised how to act in an emergency situation the same as for any other staff member.
- The school must ensure that the appropriate insurances are in place for the volunteer.
- They should be made aware of which staff are first aid trained and of the process when first aid is required rather than undertake any procedure themselves.
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the school. They must also wear an ID security badge where required to do so.
- If a school is considering involving a volunteer in an activity where there could be a level of risk to themselves or to a child, a risk assessment must be undertaken as for any other member of staff and health and safety advice sought.

9. Supervision/mentoring

- A volunteer should know who their 'contact' person is in the school. This person would usually be the class teacher (or appropriate staff in setting).
- The contact person should be available during their volunteer sessions to provide direct supervision. There should also be an opportunity for a regular volunteer to be able to discuss any concerns, their contribution, any training needs etc.
- If there are any concerns about the behaviour of the volunteer, there should be a discussion between the volunteer and their supervisor. This may need to involve advice from a manager depending on the concern. This discussion must be recorded together with any actions regarding expected change in behaviour. This will then be reviewed. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the offer of the volunteer placement will be withdrawn.
- A volunteer should know who to go to if they have a complaint or grievance, for example where there may be a conflict situation with another member of staff or volunteer. They should also know who to talk with if they have a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or another volunteer (whistle blowing). This could be the contact person in the first instance, head of year or Head teacher, given the nature of the concern.
- If a complaint or allegation is made against the volunteer they need to be made aware of how this will be dealt with and offered appropriate support. Any allegation must be referred to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and treated as for any other member of staff.
- If specialist skills are being offered by a volunteer these may need to be supervised by a person who also has these specialist skills.
- Any necessary training should be made available to the volunteer through negotiation with their contact person e.g. safeguarding.
- For longer term volunteers a review process would be appropriate. However any safeguarding concerns in relation to the behaviour of the volunteer must be dealt with immediately and not wait for a review period.

10. Transport

- Volunteers must not transport children in their own vehicles unless they have express permission to do so and are appropriately covered with insurance, current driving licence, MOT etc.
- A volunteer would not be expected to take children on school transport or public transport unless accompanied by a member of staff and where a risk management assessment had been made and this met with health and safety regulations.

11. Contact with children outside of school

- Volunteers must be actively discouraged from forming any friendship relationships with children and their families outside of school. Where people are recruited from the local community and they know some of the children, the impact of this should be talked through with the volunteer as part of their supervision.
- The volunteer must not share their personal details such as address, e mail, phone or mobile numbers or engage with pupils/children and young people, or their families, in school on social network sites. The only exceptions to this would be where the volunteer is a relative or family friend of a child/young person. This connection must be made known to the Head teacher.
- If they become aware of a situation of concern about a child from information received in the community this should be discussed with their contact person or the Head teacher.

12. Outings and off site visits

- These may include occasional volunteers as well as regular volunteers.
- Occasional volunteers, or others who have not had DBS checks, must not be left unsupervised or alone with children at any time.
- There should be a briefing meeting at the start of the outing to ensure that volunteers are clear about the plan for the day, who the team leader is, the children who are their responsibility, any special needs of these children, who to ask for advice, who has the first aid kit, basic road safety advice etc.
- Points 1-10 also apply to outings.

Appendix 1

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2016 (Paragraphs 122 – 127)

Volunteers

122. Under no circumstances should a volunteer in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be left unsupervised or allowed to work in regulated activity.

123. Volunteers who on an unsupervised basis teach or look after children regularly, or provide personal care on a one-off basis in schools and colleges, will be in regulated activity. The school or college should obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (which should include barred list information) for all volunteers who are new to working in regulated activity. Existing volunteers in regulated activity do not have to be re-checked if they have already had a DBS check (which includes barred list information). However, schools and colleges may conduct a repeat DBS check (which should include barred list information) on any such volunteer should they have concerns.

124. Schools and colleges may obtain an enhanced DBS certificate (not including barred list information), for volunteers who are not engaging in regulated activity but have the opportunity to come into contact with children on a regular basis, e.g. supervised volunteers (see paragraph 126 for supervision). Employers are not legally permitted to request barred list information on a volunteer who, because they are supervised, is not in regulated activity.

125. The school or college should undertake a risk assessment and use their professional judgement and experience when deciding whether to seek an enhanced DBS check for any volunteer not engaging in regulated activity. In doing so they should consider:

- the nature of the work with children;
- what the establishment knows about the volunteer, including formal or informal information offered by staff, parents and other volunteers;
- whether the volunteer has other employment or undertakes voluntary activities where referees can advise on suitability; and
- whether the role is eligible for an enhanced DBS check.

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126. The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 amended the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, removing supervised volunteers from regulated activity and applying a duty on the Secretary of State to issue guidance to assist regulated activity providers such as schools and colleges in deciding what level of supervision is required so that this exclusion would apply. If the volunteer is to be supervised while undertaking an activity, which would be regulated activity if it was unsupervised, the statutory guidance must be followed. This is replicated at Annex F. The guidance issued following this change requires that:

- there must be supervision by a person who is in regulated activity;
- the supervision must be regular and day to day; and
- the supervision must be “reasonable in all the circumstances to ensure the protection of children.”

127. The DBS cannot provide barred list information on any person, including volunteers, who are not in, or seeking to enter, regulated activity.

Appendix 2: Volunteer Recruitment process

- DBS checks for all and a barred list check where volunteers have unsupervised access to children and young people.
- Informal Interview with Head teacher or nominated senior member of staff to include discussion about previous work or contact with children, safeguarding and advise of the school’s safeguarding policy.
- 2 references (one of which should, where possible, include their most recent paid and/or voluntary work with children/young people).
- A conversation with the person who last ‘employed’ a prospective volunteer – either as a volunteer, or in a paid capacity.
- Completion of a volunteer recruitment form which includes personal details, background, skills, types of activities they would like to help in, times they are available.
- Where volunteers have been recruited by another organisation and work in an educational establishment, e.g. sports coaches from a local club or early-years activity provider, the establishment should obtain assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted.

The following process will therefore be followed when recruiting volunteers:

