

ST VINCENT DE PAUL CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



Volunteer Helpers Policy

*"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus
as we learn, love and grow together"*

Document Date: Autumn 2024
Review Date: Autumn 2025
Reviewed by the Safeguarding Committee

Ratified at Full Governing Body meeting

Signature:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Smith', written over a horizontal line.

Chair of Governors

Date ratified: 3rd December 2024

Volunteer Helpers in School Policy

Context and Vision

St Vincent de Paul School forms an open and welcoming Catholic community. We encourage parents and other adults to help the school in a variety of ways and greatly appreciate the contribution they make. We believe that parents and carers can add enormous value to children's learning opportunities and experiences.

However, our overriding concern is the safety and security of the children in our care. Our school policy is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as necessary, whilst remaining safe. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Safeguarding policy.

1. Aims of Volunteer Helpers Policy

- To provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations and guidelines for volunteering in school
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning, to raise standards of achievement and to promote community links.

2. Volunteer helpers are:

- Parents or other adults carrying out tasks.
- Secondary school students on work experience.
- University students/graduates on placement.
- School governors (see separate Governor Visits policy)

In every instance the contribution of the volunteer will be determined, directed, supervised and evaluated by the class teacher or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. The responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of the children remains with the class teacher at all times.

Volunteers will not usually be unsupervised. However, student teachers nearing the completion of their training may wish to take sole responsibility for some lessons. Such an arrangement must be negotiated and agreed with a member of the Senior Leadership Team

3. Safeguarding Checks

It is Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and school policy that all volunteers will be required to obtain a DBS disclosure at the appropriate level if they

- work directly and regularly (once a week or more) or intensively (four or more times in a thirty day period) with children in school.

The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

4. Volunteers not requiring an Enhanced Disclosure

Volunteers or parents who accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fetes, school sports days etc and who do not have unsupervised access to children. **(Appendix 1)**

5. Regular Volunteer Checklist

Have you completed the school's own application form to be a volunteer? (Appendix 2)

This must be completed before you start volunteering and your application agreed by the Headteacher. The Headteacher has the right to decline your offer to volunteer.

Have you provided the school with the names and contact details of two contacts who can provide a reference for you?

These may be employers but may equally be someone who knows you well and can act as a character reference for you. They will be asked if you are a suitable candidate to work with children. This will be requested on the above application form. (Appendix 2)

Have you completed the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) form?

All regular volunteers must have clearance under this scheme. Forms are available from the school office and staff will explain which personal identification documents they require.

Do you sign in at the main school office?

When any volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office and collect a visitor/volunteer helper badge which must be worn at all times in school. Please indicate your arrival time and which class you will be visiting.

Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises.

Are you prepared to maintain confidentiality about your volunteering in school?

We recognise that for staff and parents of other children to be confident about helpers in school all volunteers will need to agree to a protocol about confidentiality and conduct.

Are you prepared to volunteer in classes other than your own child's class?

It is the policy of the school to ask parents not to support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child. Helpers will be asked to support in classes where there is the most need for support.

6. Monitoring and Review

The day to day monitoring of this policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Leadership Team.

Appendix 1: Volunteer's Agreement for School Trip

Volunteer's Agreement for School Trip

Destination:..... Date

Name of Volunteer.....

Name of who to contact in an emergency and telephone number

.....

Relevant medical information.....

As a volunteer helper:

- I have been acquainted with the arrangements for the event and with the nature of the duties
- I understand that the group leaders/Teachers will be responsible for the conduct of the event and I am willing to undertake any reasonable duties which the group leaders may ask me to perform
- I have read and understood the Risk assessment for the trip

I agree to:

- be in charge of the supervision of a small group of children
- inform the school immediately if I am unable to participate in the trip due to a change in circumstances
- tell the school staff if I observe any inappropriate behaviour or anything that concerns me
- treat any information with total confidentiality
- respect and listen to the guidance of the teachers at all times

I agree not to:

- share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team
- take any photographs on personal phones or cameras
- engage the children in any activity that the staff have not outlined for the trip
- visit any retail outlets within the location without the express permission of the group leader

Signed:..... Date:

Appendix 2: Volunteer's Application Form

St Vincent de Paul Catholic Primary School

APPLICATION FORM FOR VOLUNTEERS

Title: Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms	Next of Kin / Emergency Contact:			
Surname:	Surname:			
Forename:	Forename:			
Date of Birth:	Address:			
Present Address:	Telephone:			
	Relationship to you:			
	Are you registered disabled? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
	Hearing impairment		Other	
	Mobility impairment			
Telephone:	Visual impairment			
E-mail:	Learning Disability			
How did you hear about us?	Mental Health Condition			
Have you worked as a volunteer in any other sector?				
Reasons for applying: Are you: (Please tick all which are appropriate)	Please give us the following information: Are you: (Please tick all which are appropriate)			

Seeking to fill some spare time			<i>In full time employment</i>
Seeking to use a particular skill			In part time employment
<i>Seeking a career in education</i>			Seeking employment
<i>Seeking opportunities to meet people</i>			Retired
Seeking work experience			In full / part time education (please state which)
Seeking a student placement			Name of School/College and Year Group:
Other (please specify)			Other (please specify)

Please indicate how much time you could commit on a regular basis by ticking the appropriate boxes.

	AM	PM		AM	PM
Monday			Thursday		
Tuesday			Friday		
Wednesday					

Have you any previous experience as a volunteer in schools?

.....

Please provide the names and addresses of two referees.

These can be friends or neighbours who have known you for at least two years.

For applicants in education, one referee should be your teacher / year head or head teacher / college / university tutor and the other any person over the age of 18 years who has known you for at least two years.

If you are currently, or have recently been involved in any voluntary work / work experience etc, one of your referees should be from that organisation.

In all cases your referees must not be related to you.

Ref 1: Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss Friend/neighbour/teacher/other

Address:

Telephone:..... E-mail:

Ref 2: Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss Friend/neighbour/teacher/other

Address:

Telephone:..... E-mail:

This post is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act. You are therefore required to declare any convictions including those which are 'spent'.

Have you received a criminal conviction? **Yes** **No**

If 'Yes' please seal the details in an envelope and return it with your application form. A conviction will not automatically bar you from undertaking work within the school. All

information will be used for recruitment purposes and will be treated in the strictest confidence.

I certify that the information I have given on this application is correct. Please sign and date below:

Signature:

Date:

Print name:

Please return the completed application form to the School Office together with any other documentation you have been asked to provide.