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Volunteers in School Policy

Edenham C of E Primary School

Church schools serving their communities through excellence, exploration and encouragement within the love of God.

The diocese of Lincoln is called to faithful worship, confident discipleship and joyful service and our church schools bear witness to our belief that every child is made in the image of God and loved by Him. They were founded for the good of their local communities so that children can be educated through the values and stories of Christianity.

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Excellence Exploration Encouragement

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Aim

The aim of this policy is to:

- To provide parents and volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
- To encourage the wider community to engage with children's learning to raise standards of achievement.
- To promote the growth and sustainability of our school community.
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by ensuring a shared knowledge of procedures.

Introduction

Volunteers are parents or other adults working alongside the school staff and pupils in school or on school trips.

Thank you for volunteering to help our support our school community.

At Edenham CE Primary School we welcome those wishing to help in the school and value the contribution they make to school life. We believe that the involvement of parents, carers and volunteers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as ICT, art, cooking, supporting reading or other class learning. They usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. In addition, volunteers often help when the children are taken on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of our parents' support group, the Friends of Edenham (FoE).

These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, teachers and pupils - the experience is positive and rewarding.

Vision and Ethos

Edenham CE Primary is a good school with enthusiastic pupils and a great staff and governor team. Our vision is to develop a learning community, embedded in Christian values as a Church of England School, in which everyone is supported in becoming a caring, collaborative, critical and creative thinker. As an inclusive school we celebrate diversity and value the achievements of all children. We are committed to providing the greatest possible access for all children by providing a broad, balanced and differentiated curriculum which is appropriate for meeting their needs. We particularly want to ensure that parents and pupils are fully participative in the process. This mission statement and vision, agreed by all, is key to the way we work and we expect all staff, the Local Board and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement with it, and to proactively work with us to achieve it.

Safeguarding

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, volunteers who are not already known to the school will be asked to attend an informal interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. 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.

All schools are required to hold a register of the checks undertaken. In order for you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS online check. We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. We will help you get the process started. Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children. The

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Head Teacher is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and works with the school's senior administrator to ensure that this information is recorded and kept up to date. Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, relatives in school days etc who do not have unsupervised access to children do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children; risk assessments for these events will include planning for the inclusion of these volunteers.

Becoming a Volunteer in School

All volunteers will be asked to attend an induction meeting which will cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty
- Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Fire

Deployment of Volunteers

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need for support. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not always be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting for the child and perhaps can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the Headteacher's discretion after discussion with class teachers. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that they will not always be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g. supporting practical science work).

Volunteer Roles in School

Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that parents do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Sharing books (see appendix 2)
- Working with ICT
- Supporting learning during lesson time activities
- Playing games
- Making things
- Cooking
- Gardening
- Sewing
- Coming with us on visits (see Annex 3)

The teacher will give you:

- Clear guidelines about the activity
- Support during the activity, if required

Teachers will also invite and welcome feedback back directly to them, for example on how successful it was, whether or not pupils engaged well, what pupil learning or skills you noticed during that time; they may also ask you to look out specific learning or skills in advance.

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Procedures and Protocols

*All the aspects below are supported with additional policy statements that can be read in conjunction with this policy for further information. The policies are available on the school's website: www.edenham.lincs.sch.uk/policies.asp or in hard copy from the school office.

Safeguarding

When a volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in, in the main entrance foyer, logging their arrival time and which class/person they will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for.

You will be greeted by a member of the office staff or other key staff, and given a visitor badge. This must be worn at all times in school. Please refer to the reverse side of the badge for a summary of safeguarding expectations when on site.

Volunteers with a DBS clearance will have been identified to staff members.

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

Confidentiality

It is essential that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality. While in school you are likely to become aware of issues relating to individual children. You may see children struggling with work, be upset or misbehaving or hear/see other information concerning a child while you are with us in school. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with anyone other than a class teacher or the Head Teacher, and especially not friends or family or a child's parent.

Teachers or the school's leadership have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child.

Volunteers working in classrooms do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school. If you ever have any concerns about a child, please speak to the class teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.

It can be difficult not to want to share positive observations about specific children with their families but this should also be avoided as sometimes information can be misunderstood. If you see or hear something really great – again, please let the class teacher know so they can pass it on.

Volunteers are asked to sign a 'Volunteer in School Protocol' (see Annex 4) a copy of which will be kept in school. Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the Prevent Duty (see Annex 5) about a child must be shared immediately with the Designated Lead for Safeguarding as soon as possible after the disclosure.

The Designated Leads for safeguarding are: The Executive Head Teacher (DSL) and the Head of School (deputy DSL). If both of these are not immediately available, please consult with the class teacher you have been working with.

Health and Safety

We wish to ensure that all members of our school community remain safe and well when working in or visiting our school. We all share this responsibility to help keep each other safe; incidents or areas of concern to you should be identified either to the class teacher or directly to the Head Teacher so that they can be quickly rectified or investigated.

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Fire Safety and Emergency Evacuation

Fire or emergency evacuation information is displayed prominently by all fire doors on the interior and to the exterior of the buildings; please make sure you read this information as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, a loud continuous alarm bell will sound; everyone should leave the building IMMEDIATELY and gather at the muster point on the playground. Always follow the instructions of the staff as necessary. A roll call for visitors on site will be taken.

Guidelines for Supporting Children in School

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them. Try and ensure that you model the correct vocabulary and encourage them to do the same.
- There is no rush. We give the children time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although some children may need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Please don't be tempted to do the work for them; the learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is often much more important than the end product.

When playing games with the children, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser.

☑ It is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.

☑ Do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

☑ If a child has an injury of any sort – please offer them care and attention of course, but find a member of staff straightaway so they are aware of what has happened and so that they can ensure the children receive the appropriate attention. Do not attempt to administer first aid unless in exceptional circumstances.

☑ Do not help children with personal or intimate care – this duty is for staff if necessary.

General Housekeeping;

Mobile phones

Please keep your mobile phone switched off whilst helping in school and safely out of reach. Do NOT take photographs with your own phone or camera whilst working as a volunteer in school.

Tea / Coffee arrangements

If you are in school over a break period, there are tea and coffee facilities in the staffroom. You are welcome to join staff for refreshments in the staffroom unless a meeting is taking place.

Photocopier

The photocopier is located in the ICT suite. You may be asked to use this machine to support the class teacher in preparing resources. Please ask in the school office if you are unsure of how to use it.

First Aid

Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or teacher on yard duty if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.

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Attendance

If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it is really helpful to know in advance, even if that's only a phone message on the morning in question.

References

Occasionally, volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months attendance of regular volunteering (e.g. once a week) before we feel able to provide a work-based reference. We believe that this is fair to both prospective employers and candidates.

Thank you!

In case we forget to say so please be assured that we really do appreciate your help (we may sometimes forget to say so because we are busy, but we do!!)

If you have any worries or queries, or any good ideas on how we can improve something, please let us know - we are always willing to listen.

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School Volunteer request Form

Volunteer Name:

Address:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

If a parent of a child/ren in the school please give names and classes:
.....

Have you read the School Volunteer Policy? YES/NO*

Have you already completed the DBS Clearance process through the school office? YES / NO*

or

Are you willing to complete an online DBS check?

(* Delete as appropriate)

Which area/s of the school would you prefer to support?

Do you have any specific skills / strengths that could be utilised?

Are there any activities that you cannot support? Please give details:
.....

When are you available to support in school? Please give days and times:
.....
.....

For Office use:	
Date document received:	
Date DBS viewed AND added to SCR:	
Signature of Head Teacher:	
Date:	

What does 'sharing books with children' mean?

A few quick pointers to help you when you are asked to read or share a book with a child:

- The teacher will indicate whether you should read to the child or the child should read to you. If this is not clear, ask.
- If the child appears 'stuck', tell them gently to use their phonics and 'sound it out' or encourage a sensible guess based on what has already been read or look at the illustrations for clues, and if all else fails, tell them the word. Quite often a lack of confidence will inhibit them from making an attempt and this is what we all try to build up when we hear children read- the idea that taking a risk, even if wrong, will teach us something.
- If a child seems reluctant or needs persuasion, try 'Paired Reading' to begin with for page or paragraph, or even throughout a book – 'I Read, We Read, You Read'. It is a great strategy for developing confidence.
- Encourage the child to predict what might happen next and discuss how they feel about the story and characters.
- Make the experience an enjoyable one, sharing your love of books with the child. This is a moment of quality time for you both.
- Please do not move the child onto another level from the reading scheme unless asked to. If a child has done particularly well in their reading, please be sure to share this with the class teacher. Equally, please let the teacher know if any problems.

Guidance for Volunteers for School Trips

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy for trips and visits. If you have any questions about a school trip, please see the class teacher. We do appreciate your help on school trips – it would be difficult to organise visits outside school without parent volunteers.

Volunteers should be aware that:

- Parents may not always have their own child in their group.
- The lead adult will give volunteers a list of children for whom they are responsible if required.
- All children are told that they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times.
- If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group put on their seatbelts. Staff will have equipment for sickness during travel if needed.
- Staff members are responsible for ALL first aid and medication.
- The lead adult and staff set and lead the rules, routines and expectations for the day.
- Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions as required.
- If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and associated parents in emergency situations.
- If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g. to take a child to the toilet, please inform another adult.
- Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality on visits as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the lead adult, or if you would rather, the Headteacher on return from the trip.
- Do NOT take photographs using your own phone or camera during a trip.

Volunteer in School Protocol

Please read and sign the document below to confirm your agreement with the following school expectations as a volunteer:

As a school we agree to:

- SHARE the Volunteers Handbook document, and talk you through it as early as possible.
- Explain your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children
- Share the school behaviour and ethos policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour
- Ensure that the children you work with behave and work well
- Treat you with the same respect and care received by all members of our school community
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with
- Let you know in advance the overall plan for the day and let you know if this changes
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality

We agree not to ask you to:

- Deal with difficult or challenging behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel unprepared to complete

Signed: Date:

Executive Head Teacher

Volunteer Helper (full name):

As a volunteer helper I agree to:

- Use the school behaviour and ethos policy and inform the teacher if I see any inappropriate behaviour
- Inform the class teacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead or Head Teacher if I observe anything that
- concerns me in school
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if I am unable to come into school for any reason as soon as possible
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the lead adult at all times
- Complete the appropriate DBS safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations to the Headteacher prior to starting as a volunteer helper
- NOT share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team
- I can confirm that I have read and understood the Volunteers Handbook

Signed: Date:

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Safeguarding Including the PREVENT Duty

Safeguarding

Everyone has a duty to keep children safe. Children may disclose information or worries at any point during the school day. It is not unusual for children to disclose information to people they feel less affiliated to and anything could trigger this.

If a child says something that concerns you:

- DON'T make promises of secrecy
- DON'T ask questions of the child
- DON'T appear shocked or terrified but instead remain calm and reassuring
- DON'T delay in reporting the disclosure
- DO listen closely and carefully to everything the child says
- DO report it to one of the school's designated officers for child protection immediately
- DO complete a **record of concern form*** as soon as possible noting the date, time and as close to the exact wording as you can of the child's disclosure

The school's designated officers for safeguarding are: the Executive Head Teacher (DSL) and the Head of School (deputy DSL)

***The record of concern form can be requested from the school office**

The PREVENT Duty

Schools have a duty to provide a form of safeguarding to recognise children at risk of, or who may be vulnerable to, potential radicalisation. While Lincolnshire remains a low-risk area, we must remain mindful of this risk to children and be aware of signs that could warrant early intervention. Radicalisation could be for example religious, animal rights or political in nature.

This very much follows the same procedures as above in school and should be reported in the same manner.

Signs could include:

- Expressing extreme views regarding people of other ethnicities, cultures or faiths
- Unusual or unsafe online activity
- Disclosures regarding family members views or behaviours towards other ethnic groups
- Signs of isolation, fear or rejection of peer groups
- Recent political or religious conversion
- Conflict with family over political or religious views