Volunteer Parent Helpers in School Policy

Sussex Road Primary School

Approved by:	**HT**	**Date:**	**September 2026**
Next review due:	**September 2027**		

Rationale

There are several important areas in the education of children where parents and volunteer helpers can be positively involved and children derive numerous benefits from such a partnership. At Sussex Road School we recognise that parents and volunteer helpers are an important part of the school community and we seek to encourage strong links between school and home. We welcome and appreciate the efforts of our volunteers. Should a parent wish volunteer to support in school, it is essential that both the teacher and parent are clear what will be expected of them.

Regular adult helpers must undergo an enhanced DSB check in accordance with the LEA guidance. This check is carried out electronically in school.

Sussex Road is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Benefits for the child

- Parents are recognised as playing an important role in the educational process
- With more positive attitudes towards school, a child is less likely to perceive conflict between home and school especailly if parent and teacher are seen to be working toward the same ends.
- Enrichment of the child's education because of:
- the freeing of teachers and Teaching Assistants to concentrate on the central task of education
- dimensions may be added by parents or other adults for example where they have specific skills and knowledge that can enhance the curriculum being taught.

Benefits for the parent

- Recognising that education is part of a lifelong process for themselves and their children.
- The recognition of their own contribution to local children's learning and the satisfaction of taking an active role in supporting the school, the teaching profession and the education system.
- An understanding of and empathy for the aims and teaching methods of the school throug better understanding.

Benefits for the teacher

- Information about the locality and the community
- Good working relationship between staff and parents
- Acknowledging that education is part of a lifelong process for everyone.

Volunteers at Sussex Road School

Adults are warmly welcomed to help in school at mutually agreed times. Whilst we appreciate regular help in school, there are some tasks or special projects which can also be carried out at home, which are of equal benefit to the staff and children.

Adults helping in school will initially meet with the Deputy Headteacher or her representative who will allocate and explain tasks required, the volunteers will then work under the direct supervision of the class teacher or Subject leader. Regular helpers rapidly learn individual practices, but policy documents are available to give a deeper understanding of our methods and ideas.

Parent helpers should be aware that their presence in the school can sometimes cause adverse reactions from their child and casue possible conflicts of interest. To minimise this the school does not deploy regular volunteers in classrooms with their child. The School Leadership reserves the right to choose which parents work in school and how they are deployed.

Reading Support

The main task our volunteers undertake is the regularly listening to pupils read – Reading Buddies. We reconise the vital role volunteers play in ensuring children maintain the momentum of reading. If there is any reason volunteers cannot come in on an agreed day, we request them to inform the class teacher or the office so alternative arrangements can be made where possible.

Preparation of materials and other support

Some teachers need help and support with photocopying, laminating etc. These tasks are usually completed outside of the classroom so as not to disturb children.

Curricular and extracurricular activities for children.

Teachers may invite parents into school to contribute to various aspects of the curriculum. Classes may require an extra pair of hands for example during art and craft, science or technology. A parent with specialist knowledge or experience that may be invited in to enhance the children's leaning connected with their area of expertise. We also

encourage parents to enlist help from the wider community in order for our children to have the best possible provision for their learning. Sometimes we will ask for a volunteer to complete a specific one off job via the regular newsletters.

Supervision of groups of children on educational
Parents may be asked to assist school staff in the supervision of pupils on outings organised as part of the school's educational provision.

Confidentiality and GDPR

Confidentaility must be maintained in respect of the children's attainments, attitudes and behaviour at all times. Any matter that is of concern should be discussed immediately with the class teacher, deputy head or headteacher as appropiate in order for any misunderstandings to be addressed. Helpers and visitors are welcomed into the staffroom to make drinks, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed here and to exercise discretion.

In 2018 the General Data Protection Regulations Act was passed. This Act is designed to ensure that Personal Data is only held by School's in order to carry out statutory obligations (Legal interest) or with explicit consent of the subject. As a volunteer you may become aware of some pupil and Staff personal data, which may include names, dates of birth, academic levels etc. You may not at any time share or publish such information relating to any member of the school's community, as doing so may result in personal liabity. In the the event of a failure to comply with these regulations the Leadership Team will required the volunteer to immedately cease working in school.

Data on volunteers is held by the school through legal interest. Volunteers rights in respect of data held are detailed in the School's Privacy Notices on the our website.

Safeguarding and Whistleblowing

All parents who help in school on a regular basis are required to read our safeguarding policies and are asked to sign once they have done so. No volunteers will be allowed to work regulary in school without the satisfactory completion of an enahanced DBS. All concerns about a child should be referred to the School's DSL Team as detailed in the Induction Leaflet and in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policy. If you rasie a safeguarding concern and do not feel that it has be actioned by the school should speak again with the Child Protection Officer or contact the NSPCC Whislteblowing advice line on 0800 028 0285 or emial them at help@nspcc.org.uk

Voluinteers are required to watch the Safeguarding training presentation on the school's Website https://www.sussex-road.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=Safeguarding+Training&pid=206 and then complete the 365 Forms register as confirmation.

Where volunteers come forward from the wider comminuty we reserve the right to take up references in order to be check the of the suitability of the placement.

Sexual Harrassment in the Work Place

All members of the Sussex Road School community have a right to be treated with dignity and respect

- Workplace harassment, bullying and victimisation including sexual harassment are totally unacceptable
- No member of the school workforce should have to tolerate harassment, bullying or victimisation from colleagues, pupils, members of the public, or other individuals they may encounter at work, or on school trips
- The school recognises that any member of the school workforce including volunteers can be subjected to these forms of behaviour
- The school will assess whether harassment, bullying or victimisation has occurred based on the impact of the action(s) on the victim rather than the intent of the alleged perpetrator
- The school will not base decisions about handling harassment, bullying or victimisation on whether someone submitted to or rejected a particular instance of harassment, bullying or victimisation
- The school strives for a workplace that's free of harassment, bullying and victimisation through:
- Raising awareness of the issues of harassment, bullying and victimisation, and refusing to tolerate these behaviours
- Supporting any member of the school workforce who is harassed, bullied or victimised
- Dealing with any issues through agreed processes when they are raised
- Ensuring that senior leaders demonstrate and uphold high standards of conduct

All members of the school workforce including school volunteers must:

- To treat all colleagues and stakeholders with dignity and respect.
- Contribute to maintaining an environment free from harassment, bullying and victimisation
- Report any occurrence of unacceptable behaviour and offer supporting evidence in any investigation where appropriate

- To raise concerns at the earliest opportunity and seek to resolve matters informally or by the use of mediation where appropriate
- Support colleagues who experience unacceptable behaviour and who are considering making a complaint, or have made a complaint
- To act in a respectful and professional manner towards all parties
- To maintain confidentiality
- To engage with Managers in seeking to resolve any complaint that has been raised – by attending meetings and/or participating in any investigation and providing relevant information.
- To raise complaints only in relation to legitimate concerns and not of a malicious/vexatious nature

Health and Safety

Health and Safety requires us to know exactly who is on the school premises and where they are. We therefore ask that every adult who comes into the school enter via the main reception door. Every visitor to the school site must sign in and collect their volunteers' card or a visitors' sticker. For our volunteer's own protection/safety we ask that they do not enter the classroom unless the class teacher is present. Volunteers will be directed to read the fire drill procedures notices which are by each classroom door.

Our Fire Alarm is a continuous bell. If it should ring while you are in school, please follow the class teacher's directions to the main playground and join the teacher accompanying you from your school. All members of the school community on site must evacuate when the Fire Bell rings even where it a planned Drill.

Conclusion

We greatly appreciates the extra support provided by adult helpers. It is important that helpers feel welcome and valued. Should a parent helper have any concerns that this may not be the case, we welcome any feedback which may assist us to improve arrangements for the future.

Policies

Volunteers are required to read the following policies
Acceptable Use (AUP)
Child Protection
Health and Safety
Whistleblowing

These may all be found on the school's website https://www.sussex-road.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Policies&pid=19 or paper copies are available from the school office

Appendix One - Guidelines for Parent helpers in the classroom

Thank you for volunteering to help in school, your support is valued very highly. The following guidelines are intended to support our Volunteers in School policy and to help volunteers feel comfortable and informed of expectations.

- Arrange your time in the classroom with the teacher in advance – it is helpful if you can also agree what you feel able to help with (there are lots of different ways we can use your expertise). If you are unsure what you have been asked to do, please check immediately – either with the teacher or the teaching assistant.

- You should never be left in the classroom with the children on your own.

- If working outside the classroom, ensure you are in a 'public area' or in a room where you can be always seen.

- Children will sometimes "push the boundaries" when with a helping parent. If a little reminder does not elicit immediate improvement, please refer to the teacher.

- No adult in school is permitted to remove/insert earrings.

- Whilst you are in the classroom you will sometimes see children being disciplined. However sorry you feel for them, please do not give them any comfort or support. You will not always be aware of what has happened previously, or the warnings that have been given and may undermine the authority of the teacher.

- We have well-defined procedures for informing parents of what has happened whilst the children are in school, and we will be the first to discuss any issues where we have concerns. ***Never be tempted to relay anything you have seen or heard in a classroom to other parents, we need to be assured that all volunteers will exercise total discretion in all respects when helping in school***.

- If you have any concerns at any time about the way a child has been treated, or any aspect of classroom practice, please raise the issue immediately with the headteacher.

- Although you will not be in their classroom, remember that your presence in the school may well affect your child's behaviour in all sorts of ways. Prepare your child by explaining in advance that you will be in the school to help.

- Helping in the classroom means that you may be privy to confidential information. Please exercise the utmost discretion in all respects.

- Never use personal devices (Phones, iPad etc.) to take photographs on the school site.

Volunteers are required to sign annually that they have read and understand the contents of various School Policies designed to protect all members of the School's Community which area available on the School's web site https://www.sussex-road.kent.sch.uk/page/?title=School+Policies&pid=19

These polices are updated regularly. Paper copies are available from the School Office

We hope you enjoy your time at our school, if you have any questions or queries, please speak to the Class Teacher or the School Office

Appendix Two – Senior School Student Volunteers at Sussex Road School including Work Experience

Thank you for volunteering at Sussex Road School, we are very grateful for your help. To ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone, please make sure you follow the rules below and confirm that you have read them by printing and signing your name on the attached list.

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Staff and volunteers have an essential duty to keep the children safe and secure. On rare occasions, a child may mention something to you, or you may see something that gives you cause for concern for their wellbeing. If this is the case, please speak to the Class Teacher immediately. The Class Teacher may direct you to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is our Headteacher.

It is important that you do not make any promises to the child to keep information to yourself, and also vital that any information is not shared with anyone outside the school.

Whistleblowing – should you feel a concern has not been handled effectively, please contact the Local Area Designated Officer (LADO) on 03000 411111 or the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline on 0800 0280285.

Health and Safety

Our Fire Alarm is a continuous bell. If it should ring while you are in school, please follow the class teacher's directions to the main playground and join the teacher accompanying you from your school. If you have any concerns about Health and Safety e.g. a blocked fire door, please advise the School Office.

Confidentiality

Please note that everything that you see or hear in school about individual children, families and staff is confidential and must not be discussed with anyone outside the school.

Bullying

All pupils should feel happy and safe in school. We have a zero-tolerance policy to bullying in Sussex Road School. Should you see or experience any unkind behaviour please inform the Class Teacher. All volunteers and adults in school are asked to model kind, respectful behaviour at all times.

SEN & Disability

Some children may have specific or additional education needs. We include all children in our activities wherever possible, but occasionally special arrangements may be in place for a child. The Class Teacher will give you guidance regarding this if relevant.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones must not be used in school. If you have one with you, please ensure that it remains on silent or is switched off. Should you need to make an urgent phone call, please speak to the staff in the School Office. Photos or videos may not be taken of any Sussex Road School children on any phone, camera, video camera or other device.

E-Safety

We take great care to ensure our pupil, volunteers and staff are protected from potential harm online. Although it is unlikely you will be using the internet while at Sussex Road School, if you see anything that gives you cause for concern, please report it to the Class Teacher immediately.

Data Management

Under GDPR regulations, we will hold any data we have for you securely and for a reasonable time period. The School holds a data sharing agreement with Tonbridge School.

Student Volunteers in School

All student helpers must be chaperoned at all times and must not be left alone with children.

We hope you enjoy your time at our school, if you have any questions or queries, please speak to the Class Teacher or the School Office.

All our policies are available on our school website, should you wish to read them in full - https://www.sussex-road.kent.sch.uk/school-policies