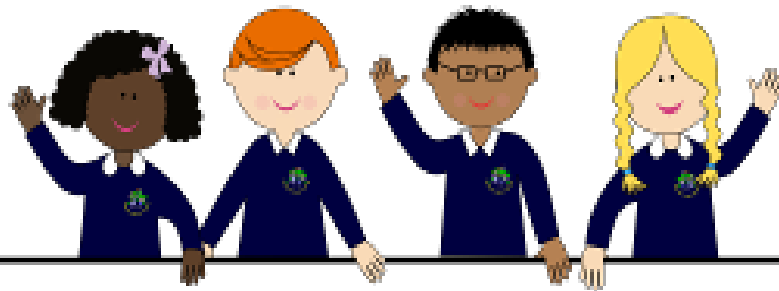




**'Enjoy, Explore and Learn'**

# **HARNHAM INFANT SCHOOL**



## **Volunteer Guidelines**

**Updated September 2023**

*Harnham Infant School: A happy and caring place where we value and support the uniqueness of every child, take account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion, to enable all to succeed.*

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**'Enjoy, Explore and Learn'**

**Volunteer Helpers in School**

Thank you for volunteering to help at Harnham Infant School; we really do appreciate you giving up your time for the children and thus the extra opportunities that this gives our children.

The aim of this booklet is to:

- To provide parents/staff 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 and promote community cohesions.
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures.

**Introduction**

Volunteers are parents or other adults working alongside staff and students. This can be in a parent helper, work experience or other role. We welcome those wishing to help in 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 and especially reading and usually work with individual 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 Harnham Schools Association.

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

**Aims and Ethos**

Harnham Infant School is a wonderful school with amazing children and a great staff and governor team. Our vision is to be a place where children can enjoy, explore and learn. 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.

The mission statement and vision, agreed by all, is key to the way we work and we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement, and to work hard 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 initial chat / tour with the Leadership Team to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible. In addition, volunteers will be required to take part in a Safeguarding course online – links and course materials will be provided. The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children. We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers who have regular contact with children. All schools need to hold a register of checks undertaken. For you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS check, sign a Disqualification by Association form, watch a video about Health and Safety expectations, as well as provide us with contact details for a character reference. We will help you get this process started. Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these

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checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children. Mrs Bowyer in the admin office will help you with this process.

Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, relatives in schools day etc who do not have unsupervised access to children do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children.

### **Becoming a volunteer in school**

All volunteers will be asked to sign a reply slip to say they have received information and understand their responsibilities regarding:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Health and Safety
- Fire
- Following volunteer guidelines and protocol

### **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. 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 he/she 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 parents do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Sharing books (appendix 2)
- Working on the computer
- Playing games
- Making things
- Cooking
- Gardening
- Sewing
- Topic related studies
- Coming with us on visits

The teacher will give you:

- Clear guidelines about the activity
- All the materials you will need.

### **Procedures and Protocols**

#### **Health and Safety**

When a volunteer arrives at school they must sign in at the school office using the iPad in the front entrance. Please indicate your arrival time and the class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when you 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. A visitor lanyard must be worn at all times. The Headteacher has the authority to withdraw help of volunteers if he or she believes that this is not in the best interest of the children.

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## **Fire**

Please ask the class teacher you are working with what the evacuation route is for the particular classroom you are going to be working in.

If you hear a continuous bell, the building will need to be evacuated. Please follow the teacher's instructions in the case of a fire or fire drill. If you are on your own with a child or group of children, please leave the school building by the nearest exit, take all of the children in your charge and go to the main playground to assemble and be registered.

## **Confidentiality**

It is very important 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 friends or family or a child's parents if you know them. The teachers have a 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. If you ever have any concerns about a child, please speak to the class teacher or a member of the senior leadership team as soon as possible.

Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the prevent duty about a child must be shared immediately with one of the designated officers for child protection as soon as possible after the disclosure. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for child protection is Miss Natasha Dorrington – Headteacher and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) is Mrs Laura Pike – Deputy Headteacher or Mrs Fawn Sowerby – Senior Leadership Team.

## **Guidelines for supporting in school**

- ✓ It is vital to encourage children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them using the correct vocabulary.
- ✓ There is no rush. We give children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.

In order to maintain our school ethos (*"Harnham Infant School is a happy and caring place where we value and support the uniqueness of every child, take account of diversity, and promote equality and inclusion, to enable all to succeed"*) please follow our guidelines below.

- For security and safety please ensure that you sign in and out using the electronic system located in the school office. A visitor's lanyard and badge should be worn during your time in school colour coded to show whether you are DBS checked or not (please remember to return it when you leave).
- You will be unable to volunteer in any class until you have the following in place: DBS check, character reference, evidence of Safeguarding training, watched a Health and Safety video and signed a Disqualification by Association form. Once all of these things are in place, you will be issued with a 'Safe to Volunteer' certificate to share with the class teacher you will be working with.
- Please refer unacceptable behaviour to the teacher to deal with. In the case of any immediate danger please act as appropriate. Please remember to inform relevant members of staff for any behaviour issues witnessed. (See Positive Behaviour Management Policy)

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- Please support our children as independent learners. Children learn best by doing for themselves. Their work will not be perfect (and does not need to be) and it is important that there is plenty of praise for effort and achievement.
- Please respect the school's *Code of Conduct* : any information you ascertain about members of staff or individual children remains confidential within the school.
- If medical assistance is needed please follow the teacher's / TA's instructions or ask in the office. Staff and TA's are First Aid trained.
- Please ensure that you dress appropriately for the tasks you are going to be doing. Clothing should be smart / casual and ideal for working with small children.
- **Please ensure that mobile phones are switched off and kept in your bag at all times while in school - Thank you.**