

# **St Bede's Catholic Primary School**

## **Information for Volunteers and**

### **Visitors**

2023

Our Mission Statement:

***"Love one another as I have loved you."***

(John 15, Verse 12)



## **Introduction**

Thank you for volunteering to help our children in school; we are grateful for your support.

We feel that the involvement of parents and other volunteers in children's education is very important and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as ICT, cooking, and especially reading, and usually work with small groups in specific classes. Other volunteers help when the children are taken on visits outside school.

The aim of this document is to give you all the information you need to make your time both worthwhile and enjoyable.

On arrival at school, please ensure that you sign in at the office and collect your visitor badge, so that in the event of an emergency, staff are aware of additional people on site. Remember to also sign out on departure.

## **Disclosure**

There is a requirement for schools to carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children. All schools need 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 form (available from the school office).

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.

## **Safeguarding Children within our Primary School**

All adults coming onto the school premises, including the playground have a duty of care towards the welfare of the children at our school and that of all adults.

Every child can potentially be hurt, put at risk from harm or abused regardless of their age, gender, religion or ethnicity. Safeguarding is the action we take to promote the welfare of children and protect them from harm.

### **Safeguarding means that:**

- Children are protected from mistreatment
- A child's health, or development is protected
- Children grow up with safe and effective care
- Action is taken to ensure the **BEST** outcomes for all children.

### **Child Protection**

This is the process of protecting children who may be suffering from, or are at risk of, significant harm. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect or emotional harm.

If a child says anything to you that you feel concerned about and might possibly be a safeguarding or child protection issue, please act in the following way:

- Write down what the child has told you, as precisely as possible
- Do not 'probe' the child or ask leading questions
- Do not tell the child that what they have told you can be kept a secret
- **Inform the school's Designated Safeguarding leads immediately**
- Keep all information you have received confidential

Our school's Designated Safeguarding Leaders (DSL) are:

Lead DSL: Mrs Helen Grant (Inclusion Manager)

Deputy DSL: Mr Jamie Carroll (Head teacher)

Mrs Bridget Tobin (Deputy Head)

These members of staff are responsible for speaking to parents if concerns arise, and making referrals to Children's Services with, or without parental permission. For more details please read our Child Protection Policy which can be accessed on the school's website or a hard copy is available from the school office.

## **General Procedures**

- It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality. 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. You should not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent if you know them. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any issues about a child. If you have any concerns about a child, please speak to their class teacher or a member of the senior management team.
- Volunteers working in the school should 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.
- Please do not worry about your child's behaviour while you are helping as often he/she will behave quite differently if mum/dad is there. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class and settle down after a few weeks. As a result, it is generally preferable if you keep contact with your own child to a minimum whilst volunteering.
- Please don't have favourites - as humans we are drawn to certain individuals but it is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.
- Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
- Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way. Obviously we expect all adults in our school to treat children with care and be courteous towards them.

- Please also be courteous to staff and other parents. We expect everyone in our community to treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Mobile phones should not be used whilst working with children. If you need to take a phone call, please excuse yourself and move to the staffroom to use your phone. Personal mobile phones or tablets should never be used to photograph school pupils or staff.

## **Housekeeping**

There are tea and coffee making facilities in the staff room. Toilets are in the admin area to the left of the front entrance. Volunteers should only use staff toilets or the disabled toilet.

## **Guidance for Volunteers for School Trips**

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy on offsite 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.

- Parents will not usually have their own child in their group. This is because in an emergency, a parent will understandably and naturally protect their own child as a priority. This could potentially mean that other pupils could be inadvertently left in danger in such circumstances.
- The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.
- 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 fit their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bucket/bags, if needed.
- The class teacher/ first aider is responsible for ALL first aid and medication.
- The class teacher leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day. Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions e.g. when to eat and drink.
- 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 as they would in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher, or if you would rather, the Head teacher.

## **Volunteers who act in breach of these procedures**

The school reserves the right to terminate any arrangement with volunteers who breach any of these procedures or if the Headteacher considers that their behaviour to be inappropriate in anyway. It is normal for an initial conversation to take place if a volunteer is acting inappropriately, in which that person would be reminded of the school's expectations. However, in more serious circumstances a volunteer will be asked to leave the school premises with immediate effect.