

St. Mary's Catholic Primary School

"Living and learning, inspired by our faith"



Parent Helper Guidelines in the classroom and on Educational Visits out of School – May 2023

Thank you for volunteering to help our children in school. We feel that the involvement of parents in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways.

Some parents come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as reading support, ICT and cooking, and usually work with individuals or small groups from specific classes. Other parents help when the children are taken on visits outside school.

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

At St. Mary's Catholic Primary School we want children to be happy and confident and to develop an enduring love of learning.

We aim to:-

- Provide a rich and balanced curriculum, encouraging creativity and promoting high standards, so that children can learn successfully.
- Value individuality, promote respect and provide equal opportunities for all.
- Encourage children to respect and value themselves and others.
- Acknowledge the solid learning foundations from children's early years and help them to develop with growing independence and confidence.
- Develop a positive partnership with families and the wider community.
- Encourage children to take responsibility for themselves and others and for their learning and their environment.
- Create an environment which is welcoming, secure, supportive and fun and where all achievements are valued.

Parent helpers have a valuable role in helping us to fulfil these aims and values.

The following are brief guidelines regarding the undertaking of the role of volunteer helper in school.

Signing the Policy

We ask that you read and sign two copies of this policy. Please keep one copy for your information and leave one at school for (Parent Helper Co-ordinator).

Parent Helper Guidelines

1. Disclosure. There is a requirement for schools to carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service 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 regularly 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 for the protection and safety of the children.
2. Confidentiality. It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of professionalism and confidentiality. You may see children struggling with work, being 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, family or a child's parents, even if you know them well. Please discuss any issues that you may come across with the class teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility to inform parents of any concerns about their child.
3. Volunteers working in classrooms should do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff. This may mean working with groups or individuals outside or inside the classroom. These groups may or may not include your own child.
4. When the class teacher is leading lessons and activities, volunteers should behave appropriately
5. (e.g. not talking to other adults, fiddling with mobile phones etc) and mirror the behaviour of the class teacher.
6. Please do not worry about your child's behaviour while you are helping as initially he/she may behave quite differently if a parent is present. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class and settle down.
7. Please do not 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. It is also helpful if you are not overly affectionate with your own child.
8. Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
9. Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.
10. If a child does something or tells you something that causes you concern, please tell the class teacher or Headteacher/The Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible in an appropriate setting, respecting confidentiality.
11. Please keep your mobile phone switched off during your time helping at school and on trips.
12. Parent helpers may not take photographs / record videos in school and must not use their devices.
13. Housekeeping/Tea/coffee arrangements -there are tea and coffee making facilities in the staff kitchen. Drinks may never be taken to class.

Guidance for Volunteers on Educational Visits out of School

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy on off-site visits. If you have any questions about a school educational visit, please see the class teacher. We appreciate your help on such visits – it would be difficult to organise visits outside school without parent volunteers.

1. Parent helpers must be at the pre-visit briefing / risk assessment meeting immediately before departure.
2. Parents may not always have their own child in their group.
3. The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.
4. All children are told that they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times.
5. If the visit involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group to put on and fit their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bucket/bags, if needed.
6. Adults must sit spread out through the length of the coach, not together.
7. The class teacher is responsible for ALL first aid and medication.
8. The class teacher leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day. Please help the teacher by ensuring that your group follows all instructions e.g. when to eat and drink.
9. Parents are not allowed to take children to the toilet.
10. With older children (Juniors) a parent may wait outside the toilet while the children go as a
11. group or at least in pairs. With younger children (Infants) a staff member must accompany the children. Never go into the toilet yourself while the children are in there, unless a member of staff is present.
12. 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.
13. Please keep your mobile phone switched off during the educational visit.
14. No photographs or videos may be taken (including with a phone) on a school visit.
15. If you need to leave your group for any reason please inform the class teacher.
16. Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality as in school. If you have any observations or queries concerning the visit, please direct these to the class teacher.

Thank you for your help and your co-operation. Your support makes it possible for us to undertake many interesting activities with the children.

Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____