



St Francis

Catholic Primary School

VOLUNTEER GUIDANCE

Thank you for volunteering to help at St Francis Catholic Primary School. The staff value your contribution to the children's learning and appreciate your help. We hope you find your time with us rewarding, enjoyable and informative. This booklet is intended as guidance to helping in school and it will be added to throughout the school year as new guidance and policies are put together. In the meantime, if there is anything you are unsure of please do not hesitate to ask.

Health and Safety

For a variety of Health and Safety issues it is very important that we know exactly who is on the school premises and where they are. We therefore ask that every adult who comes into the school does so via the main office where they can sign in and be given a visitor's badge. For your own protection and safety we ask that volunteers do not enter the classroom unless the class teacher is present.

School session times are as follows:

KS1 : 8.45 - 10.30am (including registration)

- *BREAK: 10.30 – 10.50am*

- 10.50 - 12.00pm

- *LUNCH: 12.00-1.15pm*

- 1.15 – 3.10pm

KS2 : 8.45-10.30(including registration)

- *BREAK: 10.30 – 10.50am*

- 10.50 -12.00pm

- *LUNCH: 12 – 1pm*

- 1.00-3.10pm

Fire Alarm

When the fire alarm sounds make your way to the playground with any children you are supervising. Do not go back to the classroom. See each room's fire notice and take guidance from staff.

Confidential Information

Occasionally in school you will become aware of information about children which is confidential or private to the child or their family. This is a delicate matter that requires a great deal of tact on your part. Any information that leads you to believe a child is at risk should be mentioned to the head teacher. Any conversation with parents outside is a breach of the school's confidence. Comments such as 'your Jimmy reads well,' is not acceptable as others will wonder why you have not said that to them. It is very important to treat anything you hear or see in school with regard to particular children as being in absolute confidence and entirely a matter within the school.

Similarly you may find that parents who are friends will ask about the progression or behaviour of their children in school. Again, this is a matter requiring a great deal of tact on

your part and it is very important that you firmly suggest that if they are worried in any way about their child then they must discuss the matter themselves with the head or the class teacher.

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. 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 Head teacher.

Please be aware that your presence in the classroom may well affect your own child's behaviour in all sorts of ways. Prepare your child for the experience by explaining in advance that you will be in the class to help all the children, the teacher is in charge and you have to do what the teacher has asked you as well! Working in the same class as your child can sometimes have an adverse reaction. If this does occur, we ask that you consider carefully the beneficial results of helping in a different classroom. The staff reserve the right to make this request if at any time they feel that difficulties are arising.

Supervising Children

Whenever you are supervising children, the following points will be of help:

1. Always treat children with respect and in the same sort of way that you would expect them to treat you.
2. Be friendly towards them.
3. Avoid shouting. If you speak normally they will have to be quiet in order to hear what you are saying.
4. Tell them exactly what to do in as much detail as possible.
5. Don't be afraid to quietly and calmly correct a child that is misbehaving but never manhandle the children at any time. If in doubt, speak to the nearest member of staff.
6. Praise the children wherever possible.
7. Do not let the children become 'silly' or over-friendly with you. They must learn to behave socially towards adults who are not close friends. Encourage them to be polite to one another.
8. If you are concerned about a child for any reason, speak to the class teacher or the head teacher. Do not speak directly to the parents of the child - this is the teacher's job.

As a Volunteer, we might ask for your help with:

- Hearing children read.
- Reading in a group (guided reading).
- Painting and craft work
- Working on the computers.
- Cooking.
- Gardening.
- Playing in the role play area.
- Supporting work in various subjects by talking with children about what they are doing.
- Changing reading books and recording in both the child's record book and the teacher's file.
- Keeping reading books and library books in good repair and put away correctly.
- Laminating.
- Cutting things out.
- Sharpening pencils and crayons.
- Filing children's work
- Helping on trips, Christmas plays and parties

If there is anything you would particularly like (or not like) to do, please let us know.

Hearing Readers

One of the tasks that you will probably be involved in is reading with the children. This is an important but time consuming task. The exact approach will depend on the reading level of the child.

Beginning readers

1. Children should be aware that you read from left to right, turning the pages that way and reading the lines left to right and top to bottom.
2. Read the book together to start with.
3. Discuss the pictures and the story.
4. Read the book again pointing to each word as you read.

Early readers

1. Ask the child to point to each word as they read it.
2. Discuss the pictures and the story.
3. Read the story together.
4. Ask the child to find key words which are repeated several times in the book e.g. the, up, in, etc.
5. The children should be aware of full stops and that you need to pause at a full stop and not to run sentences together.

Extending reading

As the children can read more words try to get them to work out new words by making a good logical guess. Maybe the picture will help. If the child has good knowledge of initial sounds, looking at the first letter strings or small words within words, sound out the whole word e.g. ing in king

Try to get the child to read to the end of the sentence and then go back to work out an unknown word.

Even with competent readers you should discuss the stories and pictures. Also you can try to encourage the children to use expression or put on suitable voices.

Discussion Questions

The following are examples of the types of questions to use when discussing a story.

What was the story about?

Who was the main character?

What sort of a person was he?

Was that a sensible thing to do?

What should he have done?

Which part did you like best?

What would have happened if....?

Try to relate some ideas to the children's own experiences. i.e.

- Can you....?
- Have you ever?

Using the Reading Record Books

When you have heard a child read please enter the page number that they have read up to. You may put a short positive comment e.g. "good use of phonic knowledge", "well done, you remembered the word 'said' from page to page", etc. but we do ask that volunteers do not put any negative comments in the record book that goes home. Any necessary comments of this kind can be noted on the Reading Sheets which are kept in school and the teacher can then make any recommendations. The individual class teacher or teaching assistant you are working with will be happy to give you suggestions as to relevant comments for the reading age/ability for that particular year group.

If the child has changed their book, please write the title of the new book in the Reading Record and on the Reading Sheet kept in school.

Changing Reading Books

If a child has read at home and has finished a particular book they will need to change it. Every book is colour coded according to its content. The children are free to choose any book within their colour level. Please do not move a child onto a new level without advice from the Class Teacher, even if they say they have read every book in that level (this happens very rarely). Some children need help to select a book and possibly having a quick flick through some of the books may help them to choose.

Cooking

Before cooking children should:-

- Remove jumpers and push full length sleeves up.
- Ensure that hair is tied back.
- Wear an apron.
- Wash their hands thoroughly using anti-bacterial hand wash

Helpers should also:-

- Ensure that hair is tied up.
- Wash their hands.
- Wear an apron

General safety

- Keep sharp knives away from children when not being used.
- Supervise children one at a time when using sharp knives.
- Keep the kettle to the back of the work surface while in use.
- Turn saucepan handles towards the wall, away from the edge of the cooker.
- Never leave children alone in the cooking area.
- Take extra care when the cooker is switched on.
- Make sure children stand back while you are putting things in the oven.

Food safety

- Before and after preparing/ cooking food wipe down all surfaces with a clean cloth.
- Use a separate chopping board and knives for raw meat and wash thoroughly after use.
- Keep raw and cooked food apart at all times.
- Wash fruit and vegetables before use.
- Ensure that food is kept covered when not being used.
- Meat and poultry should be stored well covered on the bottom shelf of the fridge so that they can't drip on other food.

If you don't know where to find things or where to put them away please ask!

Other Notes

All volunteers are welcome to help themselves to tea and coffee during break time. As only staff members are able to use the staff room, tea and coffee, along with milk and sugar, are kept in the school kitchen, situated past the stairs at the end of the top corridor. Please ensure if you are taking a hot drink out of this room it must be in a lidded cup.

The ladies' adult toilets are in the corridor next to the main stairs and the gents are located at the top end of the corridor.

If for any reason you are unable to come in to help then please inform the school on 01664 562891. The office will then let the class teacher know.

If you know of anyone else who might be suitable as a parent helper then please encourage them to come and speak to a member of staff.

Adults helping in school with the children are always under the supervision of the class teacher who will explain the task, what is required of the children and the helper's role within that setting.

Regular helpers will rapidly learn individual practices, but policy documents are being created and revised to give a deeper understanding of our methods and ideas. These will be added to this booklet as they become available.

If you are unsure of what you have been asked to do, please check immediately with the teacher or the teaching assistant.

We want your experience in school to be an enjoyable and rewarding one. We really hope you feel a valued and important part of the school community. Please inform a member of staff if you have any concerns that are affecting your experience with us.

And finally, but most importantly...

In case we sometimes forget to say so, please be assured that we really do appreciate your help. If you have any worries or queries, or any good ideas on how we can improve something, please let us know.

So, once again.....**Thank You!**

BEHAVIOUR POLICY (EXTRACT)

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Treat all children fairly and with respect
- Set a good example of behaviour through actions and words
- Acknowledge good behaviour both privately and publicly
- Raise children's self-esteem and develop their full potential
- Provide a challenging and interesting relevant curriculum
- Provide attractive surroundings conducive to motivated learning
- Create a safe and pleasant environment, physically and emotionally
- Provide a healthy balance between challenge and support for pupils
- Use rules and sanctions clearly and consistently
- Form a good relationship with parents so that all children can see that the key adults in their lives share common values
- Recognise each person as an individual and be aware of their special needs

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Make children aware of appropriate behaviour in all situations
- Show an interest in all that their child does at school
- Foster good relationships with the school
- Support the school in the implementation of the behaviour policy
- Be aware of the school rules and expectations
- Set a good example of behaviour whilst on the school site - Outside disputes, e.g. between parents, can often be carried into school and this is not acceptable.
- Never approach another parent's child about behaviour matters but raise any concerns with staff if necessary

CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Work to the best of their abilities and allow others to do the same
- Treat others with respect, regardless of ethnicity, religious faith or culture
- Obey the instructions of all School staff
- Take care of property and the environment in and out of school
- Co-operate with other children and adults

Code of Conduct for all Helpers in the School

Thank you for volunteering to assist in the classroom at our school. We value the contribution you can make to our children's learning. We all work hard to create and maintain a loving, caring, challenging and supportive school environment. We ask that you take the time to read and follow these simple guidelines.

When in the school building and grounds:

- Follow the instructions given to you by the class teacher.
- Remember that you have been placed in a position of trust. All information you may see and hear about a child is of a confidential nature. Please do not talk about any child outside of the school.
- Always encourage the children to do their best and give them a lot of praise.
- Never tell a child off for not being able to complete a task. Encourage them to do as much as they can. If you are unsure as to what to do ask for advice from a member of staff.
- You are in school to support the needs of a group of children, not just your own child. Only in exceptional circumstances will you be asked to work on a one to one basis with your child. However, you may find that your child is in the group you have been asked to work with.
- If you are working in the same environment as your own child, do not treat them any differently from the other children.
- If you are in any way concerned about a child in your care always inform the class teacher or classroom assistant as soon as you are able.
- Helpers will be informed of any medical conditions relating to a child they are working with. If however, a child in your care has an accident or needs medical attention, inform a member of staff immediately.
- If you have been asked to write in a home/school record book always be positive and give an objective account of what you have done with the child. Never write down your own subjective opinions as to how the child is progressing. Please ask a member of staff for a counter signature before the book goes home.
- Dress appropriately in a smart but practical way. Please do not wear shorts, denim jeans or tops which reveal a midriff or a cleavage.
- Never swear in front of the children.
- Never shout or use force to reprimand a child – inform the teacher if they are unwilling to follow your instructions.
- Be aware of the School Behaviour Policy which is attached to this document and also the individual class rules which will be on display in the classroom. Refer to these simple rules and always encourage the children to follow them.
- Helpers must sign in to school at the front office and must always wear a visitor's badge in school.
- At break times you may be asked to support the staff on the playground or to complete a job in the classroom. If this is the case you will be able to have a break at an alternative time in the session. If you go in the staffroom, please remember

that anything you see or hear about individual children or families is of a confidential nature and must not be discussed outside of the school.

When assisting on an out of school visit please follow all of the above guidelines for supporting children in school. In addition:

- Ensure that you know the names of all the children in your group.
- Ask the teacher if any of the children in your care have any particular needs. Make sure you know what to do if that child needs support.
- If a child in your care needs medication i.e. an asthma inhaler or travel sickness tablets, you must carry their medication with you at all times and discuss the administration arrangements with the teacher before the visit commences.
- Always be aware of the location of the teacher in charge of the visit.
- Always know where the nearest toilet is.
- Ensure that the children in your care wash their hands after touching animals or plants and always before eating.
- Never let the children in your group out of your sight.
- Please do not buy the children in your group any sweets, food, drink or souvenirs unless this has already been discussed with the class teacher.
- Do not allow your group to be photographed or videoed, even by an official press photographer, unless it has been approved by the class teacher.
- Remember you are representing the school and always act accordingly.

Thank you for following these basic guidelines. We hope you will enjoy helping in our school.

Mrs J. Anderson
Headteacher

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I have read and understood the code of conduct for helpers in school. I agree to follow this code.

Signed

Print name.....

Date.....