

Southgate School Volunteer Policy

Introduction

Volunteers at our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of the children at Southgate School. We welcome and encourage volunteers from our local and wider community. Our volunteers include parents and carers, students on work experience or placements, Pets as Therapy and friends of the school.

The school welcomes parents/relatives of our pupils who want to become volunteers. However, placements will only be given with the understanding that they will not be working in the same class as their relative as this may not be beneficial for the child in their school environment (exceptions are sometimes made for school trips and outings if it enables the child to participate).

Activities a volunteer can engage in

- Working with small groups of pupils
- Working alongside individual children
- Undertaking art and craft activities
- Accompanying school visits
- Providing positive role models and one to one support
- Supporting independence skills such as eating at lunchtime
- Supporting children to play during playtimes.

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one-off event or on a more frequent basis, should approach Paul Evans, Co-Headteacher, either in writing, by telephone (01484 504544) or email (paul.evans@southgateschool.co.uk).

If the school is able to accept the request, volunteers will be asked to complete an application form providing 2 references in support. The capacity of the school needs to be considered, and we cannot accept too many volunteers at once.

Confidentiality

Volunteers may have access to personal information about some individuals, or other information which may be confidential. Southgate School needs to be able to trust its volunteers to protect the privacy of the pupils. Any volunteer who breaks this confidentiality and trust will be asked to leave. Any concerns that volunteers have regarding the pupils they work with/ come into contact with should be shared with a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or member of SMT (Senior Management Team). Concerns should not be shared with any persons outside of school including the parents of individual children.

Safeguarding

All volunteers have the responsibility to report any concern that they may have regarding Child Protection to a DSL. It is not the role of a volunteer to investigate concerns. Southgate School's Safeguarding Policy explains the guidelines and procedures to follow regarding safeguarding. A copy of this policy is on our Website and available on request. Policies and procedures are visible around school. All our volunteers are expected to have DBS checks in order to work with our pupils.

Essential guidelines

- Volunteers must not attempt to lift a child or restrain them. However if a child appears to be in immediate danger, common sense should prevail and proportionate action taken.
- Volunteers should not work one to one or have responsibility for pupil who have severe or unpredictable behavioural issues; such as kicking, biting or hitting.
- In the event of a child having an accident or injury whilst with a volunteer, or injury is caused to the volunteer, this must be reported immediately to ensure that necessary procedures take place with regard to treatment, communication and incident reporting.
- Volunteers must not administer first aid treatment or medication.
- Volunteers must inform the school if they have medical conditions or may be pregnant, as we do not want to put any of our volunteers at risk.

Absence

Volunteers are expected to telephone and inform school, prior to 8.30am, if they are unable to come into school.

Working hours

The hours of volunteer work will be discussed and mutually agreed between the volunteer and Paul Evans. The volunteer must be committed to and adhere to the placement and allocated working hours. Please remember to sign in and sign out. Upon signing in you will be issued with a visitor's lanyard which you should be worn at all times when on the school site.

We value having volunteers working in our school and we want you to feel successful and welcomed. Please never hesitate to ask if you are not sure about something – or for advice if you feel that something that you are doing is not working well. We'll do whatever we can to ensure that your time with us is rewarding.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher to which they are assigned. Although teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, this does not require volunteers to be in their direct supervision at all times. For example during playtimes many teaching assistants are outside supporting pupils. In this situation and many others volunteers would be expected to work alongside other adults employed by the school. If a volunteer is unsure as to how to carry out the directions they have been given they are encouraged to seek further advice or guidance.

Dress Code

Staff must wear clothing that is suitable for the job they do. Clothes must not reveal intimate parts of the body. Clothes and shoes need to be comfortable and suited to the task. It is advised not to wear jewellery that can be pulled such as necklaces or hoop/ dangling earrings. Where volunteers choose to wear jewellery and other items, it is their own responsibility to ensure that it is safe.

Code of Conduct

Southgate School expects that volunteers will:

- Adhere to our nurturing principles and values at all times.
- Respect all school users and make them feel valued.
- Be sensitive towards others.
- Be approachable and well mannered.
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices.
- Maintain confidentiality of personal information at all times.
- Adhere to all policies (available on website or request) including use of mobile phones.
- Ensure that under no circumstances are photographs of children taken using personal devices or removed from the school building.