



Parent Helpers policy

Aims: To give clear guidelines on the ways in which Parents can help in school.

To ensure good communication between Teachers and Parent helpers.

To provide a framework for the operation of the helper system.

Adults are warmly welcomed to help in school at times that are mutually agreed. Whilst we appreciate help of a regular nature in the classroom working with the children, there are a variety of tasks that can be done either outside of the classroom or at home that are of equal benefit to the staff and children.

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 available to give a deeper understanding of our methods and ideas. Guidelines for adult helpers are attached to this policy.

We have a Parent database form which requests Parents to register their skills and/or expertise which are prepared to offer to the school. We also encourage Parents to enlist help from the wider community in order for our children to have the best possible provision for their learning. From this database, requests for assistance are made on an individual basis as the need for that skill arises. Sometimes we will ask for a volunteer to complete a specific one-off job via the regular Newsletter.

Parent helpers are asked to be aware that their presence in the same classroom as their child can sometimes cause adverse reactions and to 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.

Adult helpers are welcomed into the staffroom at breaktimes to enjoy a drink and a chance to relax, but we do ask everyone to be aware that items of a confidential nature are sometimes discussed here and to exercise discretion. We also ask that confidentiality be maintained in respect of the children's attainments, attitudes and behaviour whilst operating in school as a helper. Any matter that is of concern should be discussed with the Headteacher immediately in order for any misunderstandings or difficulties to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

Parent help is also welcomed in terms of "odd jobs" and gardening around the school. We have regular "gardening parties" to maintain the school grounds in good condition and are always open to suggestions for improvements and offers of help.

All Parents who help on a regular basis in school are provided with a copy of our Policy for Parent Helpers and asked to sign a copy of the "Parent Helper Guidelines", a declaration of no previous criminal convictions and consent to a full check being carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau.

Guidelines for Parent helpers in the classroom

Parents are always welcomed into the classroom as helpers and your help is valued very highly. The following guidelines are in no particular order. They support the attached Policy for Parent Helpers and are intended to help you feel comfortable and informed of expectations.

- Arrange your time in the classroom with the teacher in advance – it is helpful if you can also agree what you feel able to help with (there are lots of different ways we can use your expertise to support the children’s learning).
- If you are unsure of what you have been asked to do, please check immediately – either with the teacher or the Learning Support Assistant.
- You should never be left in the classroom with the children on your own.
- Children will sometimes “push the boundaries” when with a helping Parent. If a little reminder does not elicit an immediate improvement, please refer to the teacher.
- We have to follow very careful guidelines on aspects of physical contact with children.
 1. Please remember not to initiate contact with children – let them take the lead, but discourage over-familiarity.
 2. If a child asks to go to the toilet, refer them to the classteacher rather than take them yourself.
 3. If you are helping dress/undress for PE etc., encourage the child to do as much as possible for themselves.
 4. No adult in school is permitted to remove/insert ear-rings.
- 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.
- We have well defined procedures for informing Parents of what has happened whilst the children are in school and we will be the first to discuss any issues where we have concerns. Please do not be tempted to relay anything you have seen or heard in a classroom to other Parents, we need to be assured that you will exercise total discretion in all respects when you are helping in school.
- 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 Headteacher.
- Please be aware that your presence in the classroom may well affect your 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!
- Helping in the classroom means that you are privy to “inside information”, especially when staff are talking together. Please exercise the utmost discretion in all respects.