

Whitwell Primary School



Volunteer Policy

The Governing Board of Whitwell Primary School adopted
this policy on **05.02.2026**

Signed _____

Chair

Record of Policy Reviews & Amendments

Date	Author	Any changes made?
05. 02.2026	School	New policy

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Senior Leaders and Governing Board.

At Whitwell Primary School the contribution of volunteers to the children's learning is valued and appreciated. Volunteers at the school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of our children. Volunteers are warmly welcomed to help in school and we hope they find their time with us rewarding, enjoyable and informative.

Volunteers include:

- School students on work experience (Y10 and Y12)
- Students from Worksop or Chesterfield Colleges (student induction)
- University teaching students from Sheffield Hallam or Derby University
- Ex-members of staff
- Existing members of staff during unpaid hours
- Members of the Governing Board
- Friends of Whitwell Primary School
- Representatives of Multi-Agency Team Services
- Families of children in school

Ways to Help

1. Occasional support e.g. at special events or school trips. These are individual events and generally parents/volunteers only commit themselves to one or two occasions.
2. Regular support - this is when volunteers offer regular support to the school for a period of time. Usually the commitment will be for a 'block' and will consist of timetabled weekly sessions.

Who will benefit from volunteers in school?

The school greatly values volunteer help because:

- the school values the partnership of working with teaching assistant and teaching students and the university/colleges;
- children are proud that their parents and carers are actively involved in the school;
- it gives the school a wider range of experience and skills to draw on;
- the school benefits from partnership links in the community.

It benefits the volunteers because they:

- will get to know the teachers, staff and other parents;
- will gain a better understanding of how the school works;
- will be setting a good example to young people;
- will have the satisfaction of knowing that they are making a contribution to the school community and to children's learning;
- can speak about the school;
- learn lots of skills which can, in turn, assist in helping the children;
- will hopefully find the experience enjoyable.

What procedures do volunteers need to follow to help at school?

In order to ensure the safety and well being of the children in school there are a few procedures that volunteers need to be aware of and adhere to:

- Come into school through the main entrance, sign in and receive an identification badge to wear. Volunteers must sign out and return their badge before leaving.

- Volunteers are recorded on the school Single Central Record and DBS information will be collected where appropriate.
- 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 volunteer's role within that setting. Without a DBS no-one in school will be left alone with children.
- Adults will complete the 'Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement' and undertake a short induction meeting.
- Volunteers should wear appropriate clothing, including footwear and be ready for all kinds of weathers.

What are the key points when working with children?

These are a few of the most important points to remember when working with children:

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing and to use the correct vocabulary.
- Model a process to the children, including spoken language.
- There is no rush. Children are given plenty of time to complete a task.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although they need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Don't be tempted to do the work for them! The learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is much more important than the end product.
- If playing games with the children, encourage the idea of taking turns and being a good loser. The real joy of a game is the taking part!

What kind of activities might volunteers be engaged in?

Volunteers support the school in a number of ways:

- Supporting groups or individual children within classrooms
- Hearing children read within classrooms
- Helping with classroom organisation/resources
- Attending school visits to support with supervision of children
- Helping with practical subjects e.g. cooking, art
- Leading an assembly or a class information session alongside the teacher

Many of the activities that we ask volunteers to do are the sorts of things that parents do with children at home.

Volunteer helpers are **not** allowed to do the following activities (except teaching students):

- Take responsibility for all or some of the class
- Make physical contact with any child: hand-holding, hugs, comfort
- Change very young children or supervise them changing
- Supervise or take children to the toilet
- Remove earrings or jewellery
- Supervise children engaged in PE or other specialist activities
- Be alone with children outside of the classroom

The responsibility for the health and welfare of children remains with the class teacher at all times.

The teacher will give:

- Clear guidelines about the activity
- All the materials necessary

Afterwards it is very helpful for volunteers to talk to the teacher about how an activity went and how they got on.

Where may volunteers be working?

At Whitwell Primary School we allocate volunteers where staff request support or time.

It is rare for parents to be allocated to a class with their own children.

Sometimes general work maybe in shared areas away from any children, such as in the staff room, hall, field or the library.

Volunteers often utilise their personal skills and help in a curriculum area such as Art or DT. Please let us know if you have an interest or skill in a certain area.

How much time must volunteers give?

This is up to individual circumstances! All offered time is appreciated – it is not always needed!

Some volunteers prefer to have a regular time each week for a term; some prefer to arrange to help when they can spare some time. All that is requested is that volunteers let school know in advance if an arrangement has been made but the volunteer is unable to attend.

What ifs?

- If a child displays inappropriate behaviour when under your supervision, tell the child firmly that this is not acceptable. If the behaviour is repeated inform the class teacher. Volunteers should not get involved in disciplining a child; leave this to the class teacher.
- It is not possible for volunteers to bring pre-school children with them when they are in school.
- Occasionally children become unsettled when parents are working with other children in a classroom. Therefore, a volunteer may be asked to help in a different class for a while. This will be entirely at the teacher's and/or Headteacher's discretion.
- Sometimes there are a lot of volunteers in a short amount of time. E.g. Y10 work experience. Please note that the school can ask volunteers not to attend at any point.
- The Headteacher has the responsibility for Safeguarding all the children and any volunteer arrangement can be terminated immediately for any safeguarding or behaviour concern.
- Mobile phones must be in bags and may not to be used within the setting at any time. Staff are provided with a mobile phone for taking photographs. You may see teachers need phones for multi-factor authentication for school apps.
- Fire Alarm or Stay Safe Indoors. Volunteers should note the nearest fire exits. Let the staff lead the children out as they know the fire safety plan in school. Do not go back to the classroom or collect any belongings.
- Volunteers may bring a water bottle or a lidded thermos cup for a hot drink during playtimes.
- Smoking & Vaping - the whole school site is a non-smoking/vaping site in line with local authority guidelines.

What happens at break times?

Volunteers join the staff outside during morning/afternoon playtimes. This is a chance for discussion about the activities or the visit. It is not normally possible to hold discussions during teaching time.

Only student teachers on placement and ex-members of staff may use the staff room.

All other students and volunteers will use the Jigsaw room for their lunchtime.

Safeguarding Checks

Volunteers with unsupervised access to children must be cleared through the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Supervision in this context means being out of the regular line of sight of the teacher or other authorised adult in the class. Regular visitors to school will be asked to submit to a DBS check. Those without a DBS check, or awaiting one, will not be asked to carry out “regulated activity” in terms of the DBS Regulations.

If a parent has had any criminal allegations made against them, these must also be disclosed to the Headteacher prior to volunteering in the school. Any disclosures will be dealt with in strictest confidence. The Headteacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if they believe this may not be in the best interest of the children.

Volunteers not requiring a DBS check:

- Volunteers or parents who accompany staff and children on one-off outings or trips that do not involve overnight stays and who are under the supervision of a teacher.
- Volunteers or parents who are based exclusively in the classroom with a supervising adult or those in places where volunteers or parents and children are in view of a supervising adult.
- Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, parents in school who do not have unsupervised access to children.

Confidentiality

Working in classrooms, we learn a lot about the children in them. We learn about strengths and weaknesses, behaviour and sometimes news from outside school! It is very important that all volunteers maintain strict confidentiality of such information.

Occasionally volunteers may 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. If a child gives a piece of information of a sensitive nature please inform the class teacher. Any information that puts a child at risk should be immediately reported to the Headteacher or Deputy Head teacher. (Safeguarding Leads)

Any conversation with parents outside of school is a breach of the school’s confidence. Even quite innocent comments could be misunderstood by other parents. It is therefore important to treat anything heard or seen in school with regard to particular children as being in absolute confidence and entirely a matter within the school.

Similarly volunteers may find that parents, who are friends, will ask about the progress or behaviour of their children in school. Again, this is a matter requiring a great deal of tact and it is very important that volunteers suggest that if parents are worried in any way about their child then they must discuss the matter themselves with the class teacher or Headteacher.

Play it safe – don’t talk about any children – refer queries to the class teacher or Headteacher.

Will support be given?

Before any volunteers begin in school they are invited to a brief meeting with the class teacher where the opportunity to ask any questions will be given. Also the volunteer will be asked to sign the confidentiality agreement (see Appendix 1).

Whitwell Primary School

Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement

By wishing to work as a volunteer at Whitwell Primary School, I will become a member of a team that works hard to provide good quality education. I understand that my role is to support all the staff and children.

I will respect the confidentiality of staff and children at all times and will not discuss or divulge any information or activity which occurs at school.

I will respect the rights, privacy and dignity of all members of the school community.

I have read the 'Volunteer Policy' and agree to abide by this while working here at Whitwell Primary School.

Name

Signed

Date

Please sign and hand to class teacher