Volunteer Policy

St Luke's Primary School

'Love God. Love your neighbour as yourself: be the Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37

St Luke's Primary School Volunteer policy

Our vision is to give every child the best possible start in life by providing outstanding learning experiences within and beyond the classroom that have a real impact on children's learning and achievement. Working in partnership with our families, and with volunteers and supporters from across the wider community, is central to our efforts to help children achieve their maximum potential and become 'Learners for Life'.

We count ourselves lucky to have so many volunteers giving up their time, without pay, to support children's learning and foster high aspirations. Alongside members of our Governing Body, parents, trainee teachers and students on work placement, we have many committed volunteers from businesses based in our area.

How volunteers can help

Volunteer helpers in our school fall into three main groups:

1. *One-off volunteers*, including parents accompanying class trips or volunteering at school events, and speakers at school assemblies.
2. *Lunchtime volunteers* who come in to provide additional activities such as sports coaches in the playground.
3. *Classroom volunteers*, including trainee teachers and students on work placement.

Induction and coordination of volunteers

All volunteers work under the guidance of a school staff member. Teachers leading an educational visit off site are responsible for all adults accompanying the group. Harriet Goodman coordinates volunteers coming in for Dreamcatcher assemblies. Bisi Damolekun coordinates induction and placement for students and other volunteers based in class. Keith Grey coordinates reading volunteers from Slaughter and May and Jenny Phillips assists with coordinating reading volunteers from Chapter 1. Class teachers agree specific responsibilities with volunteers allocated to their classrooms alongside a member of SLT. Bisi Damolekun coordinates club volunteers and assists with above responsibilities. Monica Dickman assists with the induction of volunteers and students to make them aware of safeguarding procedures.

Staff in charge of volunteers make sure that they know their way around the school and are familiar with our school vision, our health and safety policy and procedures, and the St Luke's Way that ensures all adults and children treat one another in a kind, equal and respectful way.

Volunteers working regularly with children receive training from the relevant volunteer coordinator in strategies for supporting children's learning, managing any behaviour issues, and in keeping themselves and the children safe and happy. (For details see the leaflet giving Child Protection Advice for Volunteers).

Child protection and safeguarding

Volunteers who have regular contact with our children (once a month or more) must have clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before they start working regularly with children at our school. Applications for DBS clearance can be made through the school office.
Volunteers from our corporate partners, and students or trainees on work placement, may apply for DBS clearance via their employer or university, who then provide evidence to the school of the volunteer's clearance status.

All volunteers are asked to show the original DBS certificate along with valid photo ID to confirm their identity as detailed on the DBS clearance.

St Luke's is committed to safeguarding and meeting the needs of all children. All volunteers working regularly with children, in or out of class, are supported in understanding what to do if they feel any concern about a child. The school's leaflet summarising Child Protection Advice for Volunteers is given to volunteers at their initial induction and referred to whenever questions arise.

Confidentiality is essential in dealing with concerns about children. Volunteers are clearly advised to report any concerns to the volunteer coordinator or the child's class teacher, who will pass them to the school's Designated Person for Child Protection. In the (unlikely) event of a child making a disclosure to a volunteer, the advice leaflet clearly sets out what to do and how to record the disclosure. Concerns about children should never be shared with anyone but the appropriate school staff.

Acknowledging the contribution volunteers make to our school

At St Luke's we do everything we can to make volunteers feel welcome and to thank them for the essential contribution they make to helping our children learn and achieve. While we discourage individual gifts, we very much encourage children and staff to thank volunteers in writing as well as in person. We also look for whole-school opportunities to include volunteers and to show our appreciation for all their support, for instance by inviting volunteers to see the children they know performing in a school production, or to take part in school fairs or celebrations.

Policy written by: Harriet Goodman
Updated by Bisi Damolekun October 2024