

## Volunteer Policy

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# Barrow Primary School

## General Introduction:

This policy supports the work of the school in promoting its mission statement, aims and values.

## School aims:

At Barrow Primary School we value every member of our school community and our aims are for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, to have the support they need to:

- Develop their understanding of the value of leading a healthy lifestyle
- Work and play in a secure and safe environment in which they are encouraged to develop moral values and mutual respect
- Experience an exciting curriculum which fosters their enthusiasm, develops an enquiring mind and enables every child to achieve his/her full potential
- Access an education for life which promotes British Values that enable all learners to become effective and reliable members of the wider community
- Foster ambition and expectation to carry through to adult life
- To achieve these aims all learners, staff, parents and governors will work together to promote our core values of peace, courage and respect.

## 1. Definition of a volunteer

Volunteers can be divided into 2 groups, either 'occasional' or 'regular'.

- **Occasional** can be defined as volunteers or parents who only accompany staff and children on one off outings or trips that do not involve over-night stays, or who only help at specific one-off events e.g. a sports day, school fete. It would be expected that occasional volunteers would be supervised by a 'regulated' member of staff e.g. teacher and would not be left unsupervised.
- **Regular** volunteers can be defined as those who help 3 or more times in a 30 day period, once a month or more or on an overnight stay. If regular volunteers are unsupervised the school will require an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list check (See appendix 1).

## 2. Recruitment of volunteers

- Occasional volunteers would usually be parents or carers who come in to help on a one off outing or occasion and would not be recruited as such to the position of volunteer. They would not be required to go through a recruitment process including the taking up of DBS checks. This would be at the Head teacher's discretion and where there are known concerns about a parent or other occasional volunteer it would be at the Head teacher's discretion not to engage this person as an occasional volunteer.
- Regular volunteers would be in a position of trust within the school and even where they are not left unsupervised with children, should always go through a recruitment process. The school should also take into consideration any knowledge they have of the person in their relationship with the school as a parent, grand-parent, previous employee, governor, committee member etc. when deciding if this person will be trustworthy and make a valuable contribution to the school in the capacity of volunteer.

The recruitment process should include

- DBS checks for all and a barred list check where volunteers have unsupervised access to children and young people.
- Informal Interview with Deputy Head teacher or nominated senior member of staff to include discussion about previous work or contact with children, safeguarding and advise of the school's safeguarding policy, confidentiality, being in a position of trust, any transferable risks

- 2 references (one of which should, where possible, relate to involvement with children/young people) This should relate to recent paid work or volunteering wherever possible including the last known employer
- Completion of a volunteer recruitment form which includes personal details, background, skills, types of activities they would like to help in, times they are available.
- Where volunteers have been recruited by another organisation and work in an educational establishment, e.g. sports coaches from a local club or early-years activity provider, the establishment should obtain assurance from that organisation that the person has been properly vetted and has the correct level of DBS required for their role.

### **3. Recruitment and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check**

DBS Checks are checks carried out to identify whether or not individuals working in an unsupervised activity with children are suitable to do so. This is because it is known that a small minority of people use this route to gain the confidence of children before causing them harm.

*See Appendix 1 for KCSIE guidance.*

Having a criminal record does not automatically prevent an individual from being a volunteer. The Head teacher and Governing Body would consider the details of the criminal record and balance this against the activities the individual is to undertake. Advice may be required from HR services in order to make this decision.

If a volunteer commits a criminal offence during their time as a volunteer they must disclose this to the Head teacher in the same way that any employed member of staff should. The Head teacher will assess whether it is acceptable to continue with the volunteering role, whether the activities should be changed, or whether it is the best interests for all concerned to no longer act as a volunteer. HR advice may be required.

### **4. Information for volunteers**

As part of an induction process volunteers should be given verbal and written information about the school. This would include;

- Volunteer agreement with terms and conditions to sign which would include confidentiality
- School expectations of volunteers
- What a volunteer can expect from the school
- School vision, aims and values
- Health and safety issues e.g. what to do if there is a fire, Lock down procedures, site/premises security, access to staff room, other staff areas, hot drinks on site,
- Code of conduct (including staff behaviour codes) etc e.g. polite, courteous, self-discipline, respectful, being an appropriate role model, language, dress, rules around smoking, use of mobile phone, alcohol and illegal substances
- Child protection and Safeguarding policy, practices and responsibilities including the Prevent agenda, this could be 'signed up to' as evidence that the policy has been read and will be complied with.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education part 1 (including Annex A & C)
- 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' document
- Equality policy
- School Behaviour policy and Anti bullying policy
- Internet/ On-line Safety Policy and Acceptable User Policy (where appropriate)
- Guidance for safer working practice for adults who work with children and young people
- Explain the DBS requirements, that regular volunteering is subject to satisfactory clearance and the expectation that once cleared the volunteer will advise the Head teacher/line manager if their position changes e.g. if they commit an offence

### **5. Safeguarding issues**

- Volunteers should be supervised by a designated member of staff. They should be working in a setting where there is always a paid member of staff present. Even where DBS checks have been undertaken, volunteers should not be left unsupervised for long periods.

- Occasional volunteers should never be left unsupervised, would not take children to the toilet or be left in charge of a small group of children on an outing away from teacher/teaching assistant/staff member supervision.
- Volunteers must be advised about physical contact with children in the same way as employed staff.
- Volunteers should use the staff toilets and staff room for any breaks rather than using the children's toilets or play areas unless separate toilets are not available.
- Volunteers must be advised that if a child discloses any information relating to potential abuse that they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/designated safeguarding lead immediately.
- All volunteers should be given a basic safeguarding briefing by the Designated Safeguarding Lead. It may also be appropriate for volunteers to attend any staff training sessions on safeguarding.

## **6. Managing the behaviours of Children**

- Volunteers should be made aware of the behaviour management policy of the school.
- Volunteers must be advised that it is not their role to discipline children.
- If a potential discipline situation occurs, even where this involves their own child, they must bring this to the attention of the teacher/staff member to resolve or if it has been dealt with at the time, as soon as possible after the incident.
- They must be advised that they must maintain their composure at all time and if things become difficult, they must immediately inform another member of staff.
- Volunteers should be advised of the anti-bullying policy and bring any situations of conflict or bullying or prejudice to the attention of the teacher/staff member.

## **7. Confidentiality**

- Volunteers must be advised that all information about the children and the school in which they are volunteering is confidential and must not be discussed outside of the school or with children, parents or other visitors to the school.
- Volunteers are asked to sign to say they have understood and agree to abide by the code of conduct of the school.
- They should not have access to school's records, children's personal details etc.
- Any information should be shared on a 'need to know' basis e.g. child's medical condition such as diabetes, ADHD where this may affect their behaviour or well-being.
- Volunteers would not usually attend staff meetings but there may be exceptions on a 'need to know' basis.
- The volunteer must not take any notes/files about children outside of the school.
- At no time should volunteers be permitted to take photographs, films or recordings of children unless on school equipment and requested to do so by a regulated member of staff. This equipment must not be taken home by the volunteer.
- Volunteers should be referred to the relevant school policy on the taking, storage and disposal of images of children.
- Volunteers should abide by the school/ setting E-Safety/mobile phone policy.
- Personal mobile phones and other personal hand held electronic devices should not be brought into the classroom.

## **8. Health and safety issues**

- Volunteers must be aware of health and safety policies and procedures that are relevant and be advised how to act in an emergency situation the same as for any other staff member.
- The school must ensure that the appropriate insurances are in place for the volunteer.
- They should be made aware of which staff are first aid trained and of the process when first aid is required rather than undertake any procedure themselves.
- Volunteers should be made aware of any medical conditions for children they are working with which may require immediate intervention e.g. diabetes, epilepsy, allergies and how to respond
- Volunteers must sign in and out of the school. They must also wear an ID security badge.
- If a school is considering involving a volunteer in an activity where there could be a level of risk to themselves or to a child, a risk assessment must be undertaken as for any other member of staff and health and safety advice sought.

## **9. Supervision/mentoring/alegations**

- A volunteer should know who their 'contact' person is in the school. This person would usually be the class teacher (or appropriate staff in setting).
- The contact person should be available during their volunteer sessions to provide direct support/supervision. There should also be an opportunity for a regular volunteer to be able to discuss any concerns, their contribution, any training needs etc.
- If there are any concerns about the behaviour of the volunteer, there should be a discussion between the volunteer and their supervisor. This may need to involve advice from a manager depending on the concern. This discussion must be recorded together with any actions regarding expected change in behaviour. This will then be reviewed. If the unacceptable behaviour continues the offer of the volunteer placement will be withdrawn.
- A volunteer should know who to go to if they have a complaint or grievance, for example where there may be a conflict situation with another member of staff or volunteer. They should also know who to talk with if they have a concern about the behaviour of a member of staff or another volunteer (whistle blowing). This could be the contact person in the first instance, head of year or Head teacher, given the nature of the concern.
- If a complaint or allegation is made against the volunteer they need to be made aware of how this will be dealt with and offered appropriate support. Any allegation must be referred to a Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) and treated as for any other member of staff.
- If a volunteer is involved in an incident outside of school/college which did not involve children e.g. domestic abuse but could have an impact on their suitability to work with children, this is known as 'transferable risk'. (see part 4, KCSIE). The school/college will need to consider what triggered these actions and could a child in the school trigger the same reaction, therefore being put at risk. This may need to include the LADO.
- If specialist skills are being offered by a volunteer, where necessary appropriate qualifications need to be checked and these activities may need to be supervised by a person who also has these specialist skills.
- Any necessary training should be made available to the volunteer through negotiation with their contact person e.g. safeguarding.
- For longer term volunteers a review process would be appropriate. However any safeguarding concerns in relation to the behaviour of the volunteer must be dealt with immediately and not wait for a review period.

## **10. Transport**

- Volunteers must not transport children in their own vehicles unless they have express permission to do so and are appropriately covered with insurance, current driving licence, MOT etc.
- A volunteer would not be expected to take children on school transport or public transport unless accompanied by a member of staff and where a risk management assessment had been made and this met with health and safety regulations.

## **11. Contact with children outside of school**

- Volunteers must be reminded that they are in a position of trust and that what they see, hear or are involved in whilst at school must be considered as confidential to the establishment.
- Volunteers must be actively discouraged from forming any friendship relationships with children and their families outside of school. Where people are recruited from the local community and they know some of the children, the impact of this should be talked through with the volunteer as part of their supervision.
- The volunteer must not share their personal details such as address, e mail, phone or mobile numbers or engage with pupils/children and young people, or their families, in school on social network sites. The only exceptions to this would be where the volunteer is a relative or family friend of a child/young person. This connection must be made known to the Head teacher.
- If they become aware of a situation of concern about a child from information received in the community this should be discussed with their contact person or the Head teacher.

## **12. Outings and off site visits**

- These may include occasional volunteers as well as regular volunteers.
- Occasional volunteers, or others who have not had DBS checks, must not be left unsupervised or alone with children at any time.

- There should be a briefing meeting at the start of the outing to ensure that volunteers are clear about the plan for the day, who the team leader is, the children who are their responsibility, any special needs of these children, who to ask for advice, who has the first aid kit, basic road safety advice etc.
- Points 1-12 also apply to outings.

*I declare that I have read the Volunteer policy and agree to abide to the terms and conditions described.*

Name: .....

Signed: .....

Date: .....

### **Policy - Safeguarding pupils walking to and from school alone.**

As a school we are responsible for the welfare of our pupils and therefore have to consider what we believe is good practice in ensuring the safety of our pupils. We also have an obligation to alert relevant authorities should we believe a child's welfare is at risk.

Parents are legally obliged to ensure their children get to school and attend regularly, but this in itself does not disallow independent travel.

#### **A families' guide to the law states:**

"There is no law prohibiting children from being out on their own at any age. It is a matter of judgement for parents to decide when children can play out on their own, walk to the shops or school."

Below is our policy at Barrow for allowing children to independently travel home (or to another specified location)

#### **Pupils in Foundation Stage or KS1 (Year 1 & 2 )**

Our school policy is that **no pupil in Foundation Stage or Key Stage 1** should walk to or from school on their own or be left on their own on the school premises either before or after school. In addition we will only hand over pupils to named adults or older siblings provided they are 14 years old or above. Pupils will not be handed over to other adults unless the school has been informed by the parent that they have made this arrangement. We also ask that you keep us informed of any changes in arrangements. If no one turns up to collect a child in these year groups they will be kept in school and parents contacted.

#### **We will not allow older brothers or sisters in school to collect younger siblings.**

If there has been no contact from parents and the children have still not been collected once the school is closed the Safeguarding Lead will be contacted and they will decide next steps. This could lead to contacting Social Services.

#### **Pupils in Lower KS2 (Years 3 & 4)**

There is no set age when children are ready to walk to school or home on their own. It very much depends upon their maturity and confidence. Therefore as regards pupils in LKS2 we believe that you as parents need to decide whether your child is ready for this responsibility. We would still highly recommend that pupils in years 3 and 4 are still brought to and collected from school.

If you would like your child to walk to and from school and they are in Year 4, you must first discuss this with a member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). SLT will take into consideration the distance of school to home and also the maturity of your child.

### **Pupils in Upper KS2 (Years 5 & 6)**

In deciding whether your child is ready to walk to school you should assess any risks associated with the route and your child's confidence. Work with your children to build up their independence while walking to school through route finding, road safety skills and general awareness.

There are lots of ways you can prepare your child to make an independent journey. Children who are driven to school do not have the opportunity to develop road awareness and are therefore more vulnerable when they start to walk to school independently. Walking to school is a great opportunity to learn road safety skills. The best way to do this is to walk with your children from a young age, teaching them about crossing the road, learning how to navigate and a host of other skills. This helps them gain the experience and confidence to deal with traffic and way finding on their own, in preparation for walking with friends or alone when they are older.

**Teach your child to:**

- Pay attention to traffic at all times when crossing the street; never become distracted.
- Always cross at clear open pavements; do not cross between parked cars. Alternatively cross in a place where you can see clearly in all directions.
- Look both ways before crossing; listen for traffic coming; cross while keeping an eye on traffic.
- Look out for cyclists.
- Remember that drivers may not see them, even if they can see the driver.
- Remember that it is hard to judge the speed of a car so be cautious.
- Never, ever, follow someone who is either a stranger or someone they know but is not a designated a "safe" adult. (A safe adult is someone who has been previously agreed upon by you and your child to be safe, such as a grandparent or trusted neighbour).

**When deciding whether your child is ready for this responsibility you might want to consider the following:**

1. Do you trust them to walk straight home?
2. Do you trust them to behave sensibly when with a friend?
3. Are they road safety aware?
4. Would they know what to do if a stranger approaches them?
5. Would they have the confidence to refuse to do what a stranger asked?
6. Would they know the best action to take if a stranger tried to make them do something they didn't want to do?
7. Would they know what to do if they needed help?
8. Would they know who best to approach to get help?

**If you are not confident about how your child would react then you should seriously consider whether you should allow them to walk on their own.**

If you decide that your child is ready for this responsibility then you must inform the school by completing the walking to and from school unaccompanied form. Your child will be prevented from walking home unless this permission has been given in writing.

Your child will also be responsible for their behaviour whilst on the school premises either before or after school. **Should their behaviour be deemed a safeguarding risk you will be asked to accompany them to and from school until they have demonstrated they can be trusted again.**

**IF AT ANY TIME YOU NEED TO CHANGE ARRANGEMENTS YOU HAVE MADE PLEASE ENSURE YOU LET US KNOW IN WRITING IMMEDIATELY.**

**Please complete the form attached and return to the office ASAP**

## **Barrow Primary School**

### **Permission for pupils to walk to and from school unaccompanied**

**Person with parental responsibility to complete and return this reply slip to school ASAP**

Name of child:

Year:

- I wish to inform you that my child will be walking to/from school on regular basis. I will notify you immediately should this arrangement change.
- I have read and understood the guidelines, systems and reasonable precautions set out in 'policy on safeguarding pupils walking to and from school alone'.
- I understand that it is my responsibility and not the schools once my child has left the school premises.

<b>Additional information:</b>
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Signed.....Relationship with child: .....

(Name print)..... Tel.....

Date: .....