



JOHN HAMPDEN PRIMARY SCHOOL
VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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The Volunteer Handbook is the “one stop shop” for most of the information relating to volunteering in our school. The Handbook is regularly checked for inaccuracy or out of date information, but please let us know if you spot anything amiss.

1. Welcome

Our school is friendly, caring and committed to excellence in learning. We aim to support children sympathetically and encourage positive attitudes to learning, school and life. We believe that the higher the expectations we have of our pupils, the greater their achievement will be. We are classified with ‘community school’ status.

Working closely with parents, we want all children to develop their full potential and to acquire knowledge, understanding and skills in a wide variety of subjects and activities. We also trust that they will find enjoyment and satisfaction in learning and working with other children and adults.

We are proud to be partners with Tetsworth Primary School. The two schools have been federated since September 2009. The Executive Headteacher for both schools is Mr P.Hankey who is based here at John Hampden Primary School but who is fully involved in the running of Tetsworth Primary School. The Head of School at Tetsworth Primary School is Mrs A.Charlton.

2. Our Commitment to you

As one of our valued volunteers, we are committed to giving you the following:

- A friendly and supportive environment;
- Enthusiastic and cooperative children;
- A staff member to support you in your volunteering (usually the teacher you are supporting);
- Recognition for the work that you do at our school.

3. Your Commitment to Us

We are well aware that your time and energies are given freely and willingly. Most volunteers work in school at a set time each week, and if you can commit to this for at least half a term, we would find this helpful. However, we do not insist that you commit to working for a fixed or indefinite period of time, or give notice when you wish to stop volunteering at John Hampden Primary School. However, we do ask that you agree to and abide by the guidance found in this handbook. We would also ask that you let us know if you have made an arrangement that you later find you cannot keep. Your work is valuable to the school and your link staff member may have been counting on you to help with



an activity. Just give us a call as soon as you know you cannot come. In addition, when you do wish to cease volunteering, please let the school know.

4. The School Site/Signing in and out

Volunteers need to enter the reception office via the main entrance to the school. As a volunteer, you will need to sign in and be given a green visitors badge that should be worn around your neck and is clearly visible. The badge should be worn for the duration of your visit.

The school office and Headteacher's office are both situated within the Old School House.

5. Key Contacts

If you are supporting a particular teacher in class then they will be your main point of contact for the first few weeks as you settle into your volunteering, and will provide you as much support as you need to get started. While you are volunteering at John Hampden Primary School your other contacts will be:

- The class teacher;
- The school administration team;
- The Headteacher.

6. Where can I...?

This section is designed to answer some of the common questions.

Where can I park?

Unfortunately space is limited. The car park is for school staff and official visitors only. If there is space you may park here. The school actively encourages staff, volunteers and visitors, where possible, to walk or cycle.

Where can I leave my belongings?

It's not a good idea to bring too many personal belongings and valuables to school with you. However, the teacher you are supporting will let you know where you can leave your coat and bag, etc.

Where can I work?

The teacher with whom you are working with will give you a suitable space to work in.

Where can I go?

Most of the time, you will be working in a classroom or shared space. If you need to visit other classrooms (for example, to collect children for reading), please be as discreet as possible while lessons are taking place. At break times we want you to feel relaxed and comfortable and the teacher who is supporting you will make sure you are offered a drink. As there is sometimes a need to discuss



confidential matters during breaks we are not always able to make you welcome in the staffroom. Your class teacher will help you in this matter.

Where can I go to the toilet?

There are adults only toilets in The Old School House and the Jackson and Vernon buildings. If you are unsure where to find them, please ask a member of staff.

7. Working with Children

Whether you have previous experience of working with children or not, here are some guidelines to help you be successful in your voluntary work at John Hampden Primary School.

- Be friendly and encouraging with the children, especially when working with them for the first time. Expect them to be a little nervous – introduce yourself and explain that you are there to help them with their learning, etc.
- Remember that though we need to be friendly, we are not making friendships, and it is important that the children give the same amount of respect as other adults in the school. Expect children to use your 'grown up' name, e.g. Mrs Smith.
- Our children are usually enthusiastic and cooperative. You are not responsible for managing their behaviour beyond making a reasonable attempt to help the child focus on their task. Be positive and clear in your explanations, and remember you are not there to negotiate about what the children have to do.
- If a child is overly enthusiastic and disruptive, ask them politely to settle down in order to help them and others concentrate. If a child is not engaging at all with their work, remind them of the purpose of the activity and that you are there to help them.
- If your reasonable attempts to help the child engage with their task are not working, use a final reminder, e.g. 'If you can't settle down you will have to go back to see your teacher.'
- The children know you are not a teacher, so don't feel embarrassed or disappointed if you need to seek extra support. It's better not to march the child into the classroom and explain in front of all the other children what they were doing wrong! Simply ask the child to return to class and explain to their teacher why they have been sent back. You should check later on that they did so.
- When you have finished working with a child it is good to reflect on how the activity has gone. Praise the children when they have done well with their learning and attitude; when they haven't use phrases like 'Next week



you should think about...' and 'I think it would help your learning if...' rather than telling the children off.

- Remember that the children are always watching – it's good to let them see you interacting respectfully and cooperatively with other adults in the school.
- Avoid physical contact with children – refer the child to a member of staff if they are really upset for example, or if they require lifting off or over a piece of equipment.

For more information you can read the school's behaviour policy (available on the school website). If you are apprehensive about this area, the best advice is to speak with the class teacher or other adults working with children. If you feel it just isn't working with a particular child or group, don't be ashamed to let someone know.

8. Health and Safety

You must comply with the school's health and safety policy (available on the school's website), observing any specific requirements whilst volunteering. Do not take part in, or ask anyone else to take part in, any action that might cause you or another person to be put at risk of injury or harm. You should always advise a member of staff of any potential hazard or situation that you feel puts people at risk. They will then report this as necessary.

Fire Safety & Fire Drill

Each classroom has a notice with information about fire procedure. The fire alarm is a continuous ringing of an electric bell. If the fire alarm sounds then staff, children and visitors should evacuate the buildings through their nearest fire exit. As a volunteer you should follow the class teacher and line up near them. If you are working with a child in another space, you should leave the building through the nearest fire exit and take the child to join their class line in the main play area as far from the buildings as possible.

First Aid

If a child is injured or has an accident, please refer them to their class-teacher, teaching assistant or the administration team who will be able to arrange for attention from a first aider.

9. Child Protection and Safeguarding

Volunteers will have contact with children and therefore are particularly well placed to observe outward signs of abuse or neglect. As a volunteer you are obliged, where necessary, to inform the school of any concerns which may arise. While you cannot promise confidentiality within school (i.e. you must make it clear to the child that you'll have to tell someone), you must ensure that once you have passed the matter on you do not discuss it with anyone else. The



following staff members are Designated Leads for the school and have received specific training to deal with Child Protection issues:

- Ms Katherine Rose
- Mrs Sarah Weston
- Mr Paul Hankey
- Mrs Laura Craig

If you are in any doubt about the safety of a child, immediately tell the class teacher or one of the Designated Leads. More information can be found on the school's safeguarding notice board which is placed in the staff room. Please see the school's Safeguarding Policy for further information.

10. Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks – ie criminal records checks

The first stage of this is the DBS check, which should have been completed before your volunteering began. In exceptional circumstances, the type of work you will be allowed to undertake may be restricted, if there is some relevant reason that makes some tasks inappropriate (e.g. certain criminal convictions, personal health issues etc.). If this is the case, we will always explain our reasons, and trust that you will appreciate how important our responsibility for child protection is.

11. Safe Practice

When volunteering in school, always follow these simple steps:

- only work in public areas such as classrooms corridors or in the hall;
- try to work close to where other volunteers or staff members are working;
- avoid any physical contact with the children;
- try to ensure that your conversation with children is friendly but not over-familiar;
- never accompany children into the toilets.

12. Confidentiality

The information we hold about you and your volunteering is confidential, and as such, will not be shared with any third parties without your consent. We ask that you respect the confidentiality of staff and pupils at John Hampden Primary School by not discussing things you have seen and heard while volunteering, especially when sensitive information about pupils is involved. We have a confidentiality policy / agreement that we expect all volunteers to sign and adhere to.

13. Conclusion

We hope this document provides you with all you need to know becoming a volunteer at John Hampden Primary School. If you have any further questions please speak to a member of staff.



We look forward to working with you and hope that you find school life enjoyable and rewarding.

