

# Volunteer Helper Policy

12 July 2004



## 1. INTRODUCTION

This policy document is written after consultation with the teaching staff and the Governing body and is presented to the Local Education Authority and the Governing Body in the Summer term 2002.

It is a working document, which reflects the ethos and practice within the school in relation to Volunteer Helpers. It has been written with due regard to the requirements of the QCA schemes of work and the National Curriculum and it will be monitored and evaluated according to changes within these documents as and when they arise

## 2. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

The whole ethos of Molescroft Primary School is to provide every child with a happy, caring, learning environment in which he or she can develop their full potential - whatever their needs and irrespective of ability race or gender.

Molescroft Primary school believes that :

The greatest resource a school can have is it's teaching staff. However no teacher can be expected to know everything or be good at everything. Nor must we presume that our Professional skills are unique. Parents and other members of the community have many skills which can be deployed in a school on a voluntary basis for the benefit of the children's education.

In the demanding world of Primary School Education, volunteer helpers in the classroom are a great asset in helping teachers to offer a much broader and differentiated Curriculum. They can make the most exciting and rewarding of activities which teachers wish to promote actually possible.

Volunteers cannot be expected to just "do". Their generous offer of time, requires of the School to equip them properly for the tasks we ask of them. Instructions must be clear. Volunteers support and supplement the teacher's work. They do not replace the teacher.

Having volunteer helpers in school is not a one way route. It is hoped that not only will volunteers gain a real insight into the work of the school and how education works, but also that they will thoroughly enjoy the experience. Perhaps their work in school may open doors for them.

Volunteer helpers are most welcome.

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## 3. AIMS

- To enrich the educational possibilities for the children.
- To make more effective the teaching within the school.
- To promote the partnership between home and school.
- To demonstrate that education continues through life
- To give adults the opportunity to use their talents in school for the mutual benefit of the children and themselves.
- To give parents and other adults confidence.
- To enable children to have more time to communicate their ideas and thus develop their understanding.
- To release teachers from certain tasks thus giving them more time for quality teaching, preparation and assessment.

## 4. PERSONNEL

Mr. Michael Lancaster is the Coordinator for volunteer helpers and is in charge of the induction programme.

## 5. WHO IS A VOLUNTEER?

- Anyone who wishes to be one, providing they can fulfil the Police Clearance requirements.
- Secondary school pupils on work experience placements are accepted provided that they do not live in the school catchment area. An exception however is granted to sixth form students who live within the area. Providing their school is willing to confirm that the student is actively seeking and realistically considering teaching as a career, then the Head Teacher may consider accepting the student as a volunteer helper.
- Volunteers do not need to be Parents or Carers. Grandparents and other people from the community may wish to be involved. Volunteers may help in School on a regular basis or may have a specific skill, knowledge or interest which can be called upon intermittently.

## 7. INDUCTION

Introductory meetings are held for all adults who are interested in becoming volunteer helpers. At these meetings volunteers are given a special pack to keep. (Appendix A) At the meeting the Head Teacher guides the Volunteers through the following sections. The same Induction will be given to students on work placement.

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## 8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Whatever volunteers see or hear, particularly concerning children should not be repeated, except to a member of staff.

## 9. REFRESHMENTS

Volunteers are welcome to a free drink at breaks available from the Staff Room. Teachers are responsible for ensuring that their helpers are looked after and not abandoned at break times etc.

## 10. WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Volunteers are guided in how they should question children and how to help children without doing the work for them.

It is pointed out how tempting it is to do the work for the children.

Teachers must ensure that if they see a Volunteer doing the work for the children they must intervene.

Teachers have a duty to politely remind the volunteer how far their involvement can go.

## 11. DISCIPLINE

We want our Volunteers to enjoy their experience at school. Children should be aware of the value we place on the volunteers. As teachers we must be aware of any bad behaviour by children with Volunteers. If children cannot behave in the presence of a Volunteer, the child must not be allowed to work with a volunteer. Volunteers are not to get involved in the disciplining of children in any way.

## 12. WHAT ADVICE TO EXPECT FROM TEACHERS

Before volunteers begin a task with children the teacher must give clear instructions. It must also be made clear that Volunteers should ask for advice if they are not sure about something.

Clear instructions should be given if parents are hearing readers as to what they should do if a child gets stuck.

## 13. WHAT TO DO IF THEY FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT SOMETHING.

Volunteers are not being paid and therefore staff should be sensitive to what they ask of the Volunteers. Some will willingly be involved in anything while others will feel most unhappy with certain activities.

Volunteers are reminded however that they cannot expect to do their favourite activity every time.

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## 14. P.E. REGULATIONS

Adults are not allowed to actually play contact sports with children. The differences in physical size and strength could make it dangerous for the children. Volunteers can however help with skills teaching.

## 15. REGULATIONS ON ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

For reasons of security and in case of fire, we request that volunteers sign the Visitors Book in the office indicating that they are in school. As they leave they should sign out.

All volunteers should wear a visitor's badge. This will be replaced by their own badge with their own photograph.

## 14. ABSENCE

Volunteers are asked to telephone the school if they cannot come into school when expected.

## 15. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Volunteers are reminded of important rules and guidance. Ideally volunteers should have nothing to do with first aid, but they are reminded of the following:

### ACCIDENTS

If a child is ill or has an accident to please tell the nearest teacher at once.

That disposable gloves to deal with wounds sickness or other bodily fluids must be used.

Not to touch blood or vomit.

If hypodermic needles or syringes are found not to touch them.

That all accidents are recorded in an accident book and that if they witness one they will be required to help in filling in the details.

The same applies to 'Near Miss Incidents'.

### FIRE

Volunteers are asked to read the Fire and Bomb Notices in the classrooms and corridors.

### ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

If volunteers are using electrical equipment they are asked to check plugs and leads to make sure that they are safe. Any faults are to be reported to the teacher.

### APPROVED SUBSTANCES

As we are only allowed to use approved substances, volunteers are asked not bring any materials into school. e.g.. glue

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## BAKING

If volunteers are helping with a baking activity teachers must make sure that the Volunteer has the opportunity to wash their hands. Perhaps the volunteer could demonstrate to the children and then the volunteer could check that the children do it properly.

(IN THE CLASSROOM NOT THE IN THE TOILETS!)

## CARRYING

Volunteers should not be asked to carry heavy or awkward items.

## SMOKING

Smoking is not allowed in the school building or anywhere on the premises.

## 16. POLICE CLEARANCE

All Volunteer helpers have to complete a form which is sent to the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). We then follow the advice of the CRB. Volunteers would be excluded if there was a previous conviction for child abuse or other sexual crime.

All forms are kept in the strictest confidence.

NO VOLUNTEER(S) WILL BE LEFT UNSUPERVISED WITH A CHILD(REN).

THIS MEANS IN A ROOM WITHOUT A TEACHER OR TEACHING ASSISTANT PRESENT.

THE LIBRARY IS COUNTED AS PART OF THE NORTH BLOCK ROOMS PROVIDING THE DOOR IS OPEN.

## 17. INSURANCE

All volunteers are insured by means of a blanket cover operated through the Education Authority.

## 18. ARRIVAL

All volunteers are to use the front door and sign the visitors book held by the Administrative Officer. When leaving they sign out in the same manner.

In the event of a fire the Volunteers would evacuate with the rest of the school and the Secretary will do the 'Volunteer Helpers Role Call'.

## 19. POSSIBILITIES

These are the suggestions made to Volunteers. The list is by no means exhaustive:

- Hearing children read
- Supporting groups with activities
- Making educational games, activities and materials.

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- School library
- P.E
- Art
- Design Technology e.g. supervising a glue gun.
- Computers
- Helping children with Special Educational Needs
- Leading Discussion Groups (\* Special training will be given)
- Book Making / Picture mounting (\* Special training will be given)
- Music Recorders
- Music Other instruments
- Infant Help (Setting up & Clearing up)
- After school clubs
- Science experiments

Volunteers are given the opportunity to opt to work in the same area as their children or not to do so.

They are also given the choice of the age groups that they work with.

## 20. TRAINING

Where necessary specific training and/or advice will be given to ensure that Volunteers who wish to do certain activities are equipped to do the activity to the best of their ability.

## 21. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Many children with S.E.N. need to be involved in simple repetitive tasks, which albeit simple in nature are nonetheless time consuming. Without divorcing their responsibilities teachers may find that Volunteers can be a real asset in helping children with such Special Needs.

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## 22. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Historically women have tended to offer their time to help in school more than men. There are men however with the opportunity to come into School and should be encouraged and made to feel at ease.

It is a good opportunity to use Volunteer Helpers to work in a range of activities which do not reflect Stereo-typical norms.

- e.g. Women helping with Technology.
- Men helping with Baking.

It is important that through our approaches to Parents and Carers that pressure to become a volunteer helper is not exerted. Many adults will prefer not to be involved in this manner for all sorts of reasons. Their wishes should be respected.

## 23. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

There are many people with Computer skills, and equally many with a fear of Computers. Training of volunteers who are interested could provide the school with a bank of volunteers who could sit with children at computers to assist them when they are unsure or become stuck. They could in turn show the children how to use different features of a program. In turn Volunteers could develop their knowledge of computers and help them in their own work search for work or at home.

## 24. PUBLISHED:

12 July 2004

## 25. PRODUCED BY:

The Headteacher and with due consultation with staff, Governors and Volunteer Helpers.