

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Malmesbury

Volunteers' Code of Conduct



“Walking in the footsteps of Jesus, loving and serving together”

Thank you for volunteering to assist at our school.
We value the contribution you can make to our pupils' learning.

This Code of Conduct sets out the guidelines that we expect all our volunteers to follow. Please read through them carefully before signing at the end to say you understand and agree to abide by the Code, then return the signed copy to the school office for our records. We will take a photocopy to give back to you. Volunteers who feel they cannot fully abide by the guidelines within this Code should withdraw their offer of help.

1. Supervision

1.1 You should be supervised by a member of staff at all times when working with pupils unless you have obtained a valid enhanced DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check. Never work alone in a closed room with one pupil.

1.2 You should follow the guidance and instructions given by members of staff about your role in the activity that you are helping with.

1.3 Parents of pupils may be asked to volunteer in a class other than that attended by their child. If, however, a parent assists in their child's class and a conflict of interest arises, e.g. giving undue attention and support to your own child, or using the time to discuss your child's progress with the class teacher, then the class teacher and/or the Headteacher may ask the parent to reconsider their offer of help.

2. Professional Relationships

2.1 At all times you should maintain a 'professional' relationship with all pupils and staff. This will minimise the risk of any allegations of inappropriate behaviour.

2.2 Permission should be sought from a pupil before physical contact is made. Even if you know some of the pupils very well you should limit physical contact with pupils, ensuring physical contact is only ever in response to their needs at the time, of limited duration and appropriate to their age, stage of development, gender and ethnicity.

2.3 Do not share inappropriate personal information about your views, beliefs, sexual relationships or lifestyle.

2.4 Never give or exchange contact details with pupils, including email or home addresses, phone numbers or social networking identities. Avoid any communication with a child or young person that could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative. Volunteers are in a position of trust with children and young people under 18 at the school and are reminded that it is an offence to engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child or young person.

2.5 Occasionally, a child or young person may develop an infatuation with an adult who works with them. An adult who becomes aware that a pupil is developing an infatuation should discuss this at the earliest opportunity with the Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs S Woods or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Miss R Soper so appropriate action can be taken to deal with the situation sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned.

2.6 Volunteers should use the staff toilet, never the pupils' toilets. On educational visits and outings when public toilets or changing areas may need to be used, you should exercise caution and avoid placing yourself in a position where your actions might be open to criticism or misinterpretation. Male volunteers should use a cubicle in public toilets.

2.7 If a pupil tells you something or you see something that concerns you, either in class or on the playground, this should be reported to the class teacher immediately. If you feel what has been disclosed and/or witnessed is of a safeguarding nature which may be putting a pupil's welfare at risk, then this should be reported to:
Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs S Woods or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs H Lever or Miss R Soper.

2.8 Remember that you must not try to investigate the matter any further yourself, for example by asking the pupil questions, and that you should never promise to keep any disclosure by a pupil a secret.

2.9 Behaviour management of the children is the responsibility of members of school staff (Headteacher, teachers, teaching assistants and MDSAs) and should not involve volunteer helpers. If you are working with pupils who are misbehaving, please refer this to the class teacher as soon as possible. Never try to reprimand or allocate consequences yourself.

2.10 You should act appropriately towards all pupils, parents, carers, staff and other volunteers, whatever their socio-economic background, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief. If you witness or experience bullying, harassment or discrimination, no matter who is the victim or perpetrator, you should raise this with Mrs S Woods, the Headteacher.

2.11 If you have any concerns about following this guidance or are aware of any incidents that occur that may be misconstrued or give rise to concern, please talk to Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs S Woods or the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead Mrs H Lever or Miss R Soper.

3. Setting an example

All volunteer helpers at our school should be positive role models to the children, so we expect you to:

3.1 Dress appropriately for the school setting and the tasks and role you will undertake.

3.2 Talk politely and calmly to all pupils. Avoid sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments.

3.3 Never use inappropriate, offensive or abusive language whilst on the school premises, even in the staffroom.

3.4 Never smoke in the school building, grounds or at the school gate as it is strictly prohibited to do so.

3.5 Offer encouragement and praise to the children, both verbally and in written comments, e.g. a comment in their reading record. Never show favouritism to a particular child or group of children nor give rewards which are outside of the school's agreed policy.

3.6 Promote and follow the classroom rules.

3.7 Never discuss subjects that are inappropriate for the age of the pupils to participate in, or listen to, including references of a sexual nature or 'gossip' / sharing of information about staff, parents or pupils.

3.8 Never be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when assisting as a volunteer.

4. Use of mobile phones, cameras and computers

4.1. Use of personal IT devices and mobile phones is prohibited, except under exceptional circumstances where the prior agreement of the Headteacher has been obtained. If you need to use your mobile phone in an emergency whilst on the school premises, please go to the school office. Using the video or camera features of your mobile phone whilst on the school premises is strictly prohibited.

4.2 The school's ICT equipment and mobile phones may only be used in accordance with the school's Acceptable Use of ICT, Digital safety Policy and Staff Behaviours Policy and should normally be used for school purposes only.

4.3 The school's photographic and video equipment may only be used by volunteers with the prior approval of the Headteacher.

5. Gifts and rewards

5.1 Personal gifts must not be given to pupils. Neither should you give pupils any rewards not covered by school policy. Nor should you accept gifts from pupils (other than small tokens at Christmas or as a 'thank you') without first seeking permission in writing from the Headteacher.

6. Transporting pupils

6.1 If you are asked and agree to transport children to an event or other location in your own vehicle you should ensure that the vehicle is roadworthy, appropriately insured and that the maximum capacity is not exceeded. All passengers must wear seat belts and car seats must be used for children in accordance with current legislation (including the requirement that children must normally use a child car seat until they're 12 years old or 135cm tall, whichever comes first).

6.2 It is inappropriate for adults to offer lifts to a child or young person outside their normal duties, unless this has been brought to the attention of the Headteacher and has been agreed with the parents/carers.

7. Health and Safety and related procedures

Health and Safety: You are expected to take care of your own health and safety and work in a way that does not put yourself or others at risk. The school has a detailed Health and Safety Policy and you can obtain a copy from the school office or from the school's website. We would like to draw your attention to the following key points:

7.1 Electrical equipment: Please do not bring your own electrical equipment into school unless it has been PAT tested (or is less than 12 months old). If you do bring your own equipment in we would need evidence that testing is up to date or the piece of equipment is less than 12 months old before you can use it.

7.2 Manual handling: You must not attempt to lift, support or move any load if you have any doubt about your ability or the means to do it safely. Pupils should normally only assist in manual handling where linked to educational activities and then only under the supervision of an adult. Mechanical aids (i.e. sack trucks and trollies) are available.

7.3 Working at height: Please do not use desks or chairs to climb on in order to reach items or put up any displays, a small stepladder for this purpose located in the office.

7.4 Housekeeping: Please help to keep all areas free from trip hazards. Trailing cables are to be avoided except in very temporary circumstances, when visual attention must be drawn to them. Please report any defective equipment, furniture or lighting to the office as soon as possible.

7.5 Slips, trips and falls: In order to reduce the likelihood of slipping or falling, spillages should be cleared up as soon as possible and if you are not able to do it, please ensure that

someone in the office is informed. If you discover any hazards that you believe might cause injury (e.g. breakages, unstable pavements, etc) please report them to the school office as soon as possible.

7.6 Injury: If you suffer an injury of any kind, please ensure that you report it to the school office as you may be required to complete a form.

7.7 No Smoking: The school operates a non-smoking policy and no one is allowed to smoke on the premises, within 30 metres of the school premises or in cars which are parked on the school premises.

8. Physical Interventions

8.0 Physical Intervention and searching pupils: The school has a detailed policy regarding the use of physical restraint, this is the Positive Handling Policy, the key points of which are detailed below:

8.1 In all our dealings with children we seek to minimise the need for physical intervention by adopting good working practices which reflect our ethos, however, there may be times when it is unavoidable.

8.2 All adults may use reasonable force to intervene in emergency situations or defend themselves in circumstances where they have a genuine fear of being injured – this is known as ‘unplanned’ intervention.

8.3 Only staff who have been specifically authorised and trained may engage in ‘planned physical intervention’.

8.4 ‘Reasonable force’ means using no more force than is needed in the circumstances. Schools can use reasonable force to:

- prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property or from causing disorder
- prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit
- prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others
- prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground and,
- restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

8.5 It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.

8.6 Physical intervention can take several forms. It might involve:

- physically interposing between persons
- blocking someone’s path
- holding or guiding
- breakaway skills

- (in extreme circumstances) using approved techniques for physical restraint if you have been trained and have in date certificate for this.

8.7 There are procedures to be followed for reporting incidences of restraint and if you are involved, you need to ensure that these are followed.

9. Safety procedures

9.1 Volunteers should familiarise themselves with the fire safety procedures and evacuation routes that are clearly displayed in each classroom. In the event of the alarm sounding, all volunteers should leave via the nearest available fire exit and should not try to recover personal belongings or search for pupils. Our main fire assembly point is at the far end of the playground. If you have any questions about the fire safety arrangements, then please speak to the Headteacher.

9.2 Please sign in the visitors' book on your arrival and sign out when you leave. This helps us maintain an accurate list of the people on the school premises in the event of a fire.

9.3 Please obtain a visitor's badge from the school office upon your arrival, regardless of how well known you are to the pupils. Please remember to return the visitor's badge before you leave.

9.4 Exercise reasonable care for the safety and welfare of yourself, pupils, members of staff or others on the school premises at all times.

10. Educational Trips and Outings

10.1 Volunteers who are accompanying pupils on educational trips or outings must be approved by the school and be subject to the normal checks and arrangements as outlined in the school's Educational Visits policy. Volunteers who are working with children on a school trip overnight between the hours of 2am and 6am, who may have face-to-face contact with a child, must have a valid DBS check.

10.2 Volunteers should take particular care when supervising children and young people on trips and outings, where the setting may be less formal than the school environment. Adults remain in a position of trust and need to ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays within clearly defined professional boundaries.

11. Medical issues

11.1 The class teacher you are supporting should inform you of any pupils who have severe medical needs, so that you are aware of any symptoms to look out for. All medical information about pupils is strictly confidential and therefore only very limited information will be provided.

11.2 If a pupil requires medical attention inform a member of staff immediately. They will get a qualified first aider to attend to the pupil. Volunteers should not administer first aid except in an emergency.

12. If you are unable to attend

12.1 If you are due to help in the school, but are unable to do so because of illness or personal circumstances, please inform the school by ringing 01666 822331 as soon as possible. Please use the answer phone messaging system if no one is available to take your call. This will help our teachers adjust their lesson plans if they know your support is unavailable.

13. Confidentiality

13.1 All information you may hear or see about a pupil is of a confidential nature. You should not discuss any pupil outside of school that you have been working with directly or indirectly. This includes speaking to other parents about their child or other pupils, speaking to family and friends and posting messages online about your experiences in our school, e.g. on Facebook or via email. If other parents approach you for information, always explain that you are not allowed to discuss school matters with them and ask them to speak with the class teacher or Headteacher if they require further information.

Breaches to this Code of Conduct

- If the Headteacher [or other designated person] believes that any of the above guidance and expectations has been breached, then it is at their discretion to decide either to give a warning to the volunteer concerned or to instruct the individual to cease attending the school as a volunteer.
- We want all the people who work within our school to maintain the high standards of personal conduct outlined in these guidelines whilst they are on our school site. If the Headteacher is concerned that events in your private life may affect the reputation of the school and/or impact on the effectiveness and safety of those who work and attend our school, they will instruct you to cease your support as a volunteer.

Policies

- Upon agreeing and signing this 'Code of Conduct', you will receive the Health & Safety policy, Safeguarding policy, the Digital Safety policy, the Educational Visits policy (if relevant) and any other relevant policies as determined by the school. If you do not receive these policies, please see the Headteacher.

Safeguarding training

- Volunteer helpers will be required to receive a Safeguarding Induction session (45 minutes during school hours) from the Designated Safeguarding Lead within 6 weeks of signing this agreement.
- Those volunteers that require a DBS check and meet the 'frequency and intensity' test will also need to attend the Introduction to Safeguarding training as a statutory requirement every three years.

Arrangements for monitoring, evaluation and review

Responsible committee for monitoring & evaluation:	Learning and Standards Committee
Policy reviewed by:	Learning and Standards Committee
Policy review & approval date:	September 2021
Next review date:	September 2022

Name: _____ (print)

I have read and understood the contents of the 'Volunteers' Code of Conduct'. I agree to abide by the procedures and expectations for volunteers that are set out in this code.

Signed: _____ Date: _____