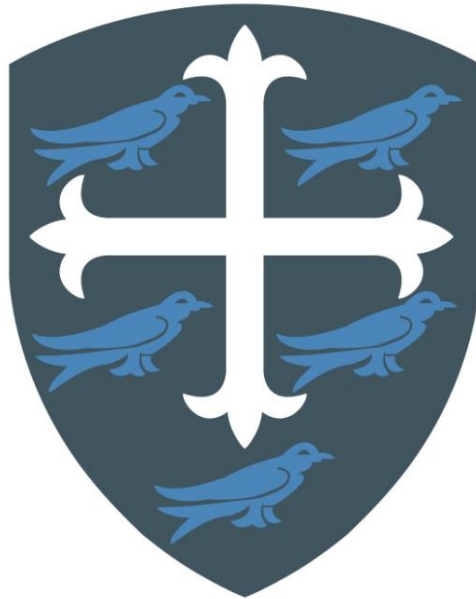


# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



## School Volunteer Policy 2024-2025

<b>Legal Status:</b>	Non Statutory
<b>Last Review:</b>	September 2021
<b>Review date:</b>	January 2024
<b>Next Review:</b>	September 2025
<b>Responsible Person:</b>	Governing Body

### **Mission Statement**

"The family of St Mary's strives to grow in God's love and care by learning together and valuing the uniqueness of each person."

## **The aim of this policy is to:**

- To provide parents/staff and volunteers with the volunteer policy and volunteer handbook. This has clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
- To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures.

## **1. Introduction**

Volunteers are students, parents or other adults working alongside the school staff and students on work experience. Thank you for volunteering to help our support our school community. At St Mary's Catholic Primary School we welcome those wishing to help in the school and value the contribution they make to school life. We believe that the involvement of parents, carers and volunteers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some volunteers come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as ICT, art, cooking, and especially reading, and usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. In addition volunteers often help when the children are taken on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of our Parent, Teacher Association.

These guidelines have been written to ensure that for all concerned – volunteers, teachers and children - the experience is positive and rewarding.

## **2. Aims and Ethos**

Jesus said, "I have come that they may have life, and have it abundantly."

The Governors and staff of St Mary's School are strongly committed to building and strengthening the Catholic ethos of the school.

Within the context of St Mary's Catholic School, the curriculum in all its aspects – content, the teaching process, and the total school environment – reflect the values of;

Faith, Hope, Charity, Forgiveness, Justice, Love, Truth, Compassion, Respect & Service.

These aims, agreed by all, are key to the way we work and we expect all staff, governors and volunteers to be committed to it, in total agreement with it, and to work hard to achieve it!

## **3. Safeguarding**

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, staff including volunteers will be asked to attend an informal interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are suitable for the role. The Head teacher has the authority not to accept the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the

children. We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all volunteers. All schools need to hold a register of the checks undertaken. In order for you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete a DBS online check. We will help you get the process started. Please be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children. Our School Business Manager will assist you with this process. Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, relatives in school days etc. who do not have unsupervised access to children do not need a DBS but must not have unsupervised access to children. Volunteers cannot start until the DBS check has been passed. Volunteers can port a DBS check from an existing one if this applies and that if they do not have a DBS check, volunteers must not be left unsupervised with children, so we place a responsibility on the volunteer to know this too.

#### **4. Becoming a Volunteer in School**

All volunteers will be asked to attend an induction meeting which will cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty
- Child Protection
- Health & Safety
- Fire

#### **5. Deployment of Volunteers**

Volunteers will be asked to support in classes/areas of the school where there is the most need for support. Parent volunteers should be aware that they will not always be able to work in their child's class as for some children this can be distracting for the child and perhaps can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. If this is the case, we may ask you to help in a different class or area of the school. This is entirely at the Head teacher's discretion. It is helpful if you can explain to your child that you will be coming into school to help all of the children and that he/she will not always be able to work with you. We may from time to time ask you to support another class during a visit if extra adults are required for a specific activity (e.g. supporting practical science work).

#### **6. Volunteer Roles in School**

Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that parents do with their own children at home. We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:

- Working on the computer;
- Playing games;
- Making things;
- Cooking;
- Gardening;
- Sewing;
- Topic related studies;
- Coming with us on visits (see appendix 2);

The teacher will give you:

- Clear guidelines about the activity;
- All the materials you need.

## **7. Procedures and Protocols Health and Safety/Safeguarding**

When a volunteer arrives in the school they must sign in at the school office. Please indicate your arrival time and which class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out and state the time when they are leaving the school premises. Signing in and out is important in the event of an emergency so that staff and emergency services know who needs to be accounted for. A visitor badge must be worn at all times in school. Volunteers with a DBS clearance will have been identified to staff members. The Headteacher has the authority to withdraw the help of volunteers if he/she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.

Some of the determinations on how this will be made include:

1. **Performance and Conduct Evaluation:** The headteacher may observe or receive feedback regarding the volunteer's performance and conduct while interacting with the children. If the volunteer demonstrates unprofessional behaviour, lacks the necessary skills, or fails to follow the school's policies and procedures, the headteacher might determine that their involvement is not beneficial for the children.
2. **Feedback from Staff and Parents:** The headteacher could consider feedback from teachers, support staff, and parents regarding the volunteer's effectiveness and impact. Negative reports or concerns about the volunteer's interactions with students, such as issues with communication, discipline, or safety, might lead the headteacher to conclude that the volunteer's help is not in the best interest of the children.

- 3. Student Well-being and Safety Concerns:** The headteacher may assess the overall well-being and safety of the students in relation to the volunteer's presence. If there are any incidents or patterns of behaviour that suggest the volunteer might be compromising the emotional or physical safety of the children, the headteacher might decide to withdraw the volunteer's help to ensure a safe and supportive environment for the students.

## **8. Confidentiality**

It is very important and a legal duty that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality. While in school you are likely to become aware of issues relating to individual children. You may see children struggling with work, be upset or misbehaving or hear/see other information concerning a child while you are with us in school. It is vital that you do not share anything about specific children with friends or family or a child's parent if you know them. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child. Volunteers working in classrooms do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school. If you ever have any concerns about a child, please speak to the class teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.

Volunteers are asked to sign a 'Volunteer in School Protocol' (see appendix 3) a copy of which will be kept in school.

The designated officers for child protection are: Miss Black, Headteacher, and Ms Emanuel, SENCO.

## **9. Safeguarding**

Safeguarding concerns including those regarding the Prevent Duty (see appendix 4) about a child must be shared immediately with one of the designated officers for child protection as soon as possible after the disclosure.

## **Housekeeping**

- Mobile phones-we would be most grateful if you could keep your mobile phone switched off whilst helping in school, and to place the phone in a secure place like the school office.
- First Aid Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for pediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher or teacher on playground duty if you are approached by a child with an ailment or injury.
- Fire alarm If the fire alarm sounds, please make your way safely to the nearest exit, guiding the child you are working with if away from the main class area (e.g. hearing readers in the library).
- Attendance If you find that you are not going to be able to come into school on a particular day, it is really helpful to know in advance, even if that's only a phone message on the morning in question.

## **References**

Occasionally, volunteers ask the school to provide a written reference when they are seeking employment. We stipulate a minimum qualifying period of three months attendance of regular volunteering (e.g. once a week) before we feel able to provide a work-based reference. We believe that this is fair to both prospective employers and candidates.

Thank you! In case we forget to say so please be assured that we really do appreciate your help (we may sometimes forget to say so because we are busy, but we do!!) If you have any worries or queries, or any good ideas on how we can improve something, please let us know - we are always willing to listen.

## **Appendix 1**

### School Volunteer Request Form

Volunteer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

If a parent of a child/ren in the school please give names and classes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the School Volunteer Policy? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a current DBS Clearance? \_\_\_\_\_

An original copy will need to be shown to the school business manager. OR

Are you willing to complete an online DBS check? \_\_\_\_\_

Which area/s of the school would you prefer to support? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any specific skills/strength that could be utilised? \_\_\_\_\_

Are there any activities that you cannot support? Please give details. \_\_\_\_\_

When are you available to support in school? Please give days and times. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix 2**

### Guidance for Volunteers for School Trips

These guidance notes have been written in conjunction with the school's policy on off-site visits. If you have any questions about a school trip, please see the class teacher. We do appreciate your help on school trips – it would be difficult to organise visits outside school without parent volunteers.

- Parents may not always have their own child in their group.
- The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible.
- All children are told that they must stay with their group and the group adult at all times.
- If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group put on their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has sick bucket/bags, if needed.
- The class teacher is responsible for ALL first aid and medication.
- The class teacher sets and leads the rules, routines and expectations for the day.
- Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions e.g. when to eat and drink.
- If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and associated parents in emergency situations.
- If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g. to take a child to the toilet, please inform another adult and this would require a DBS.
- Parent volunteers are asked to keep the same degree of confidentiality on visits as in school. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher, or if you would rather, the Head teacher on return from the trip.



## Appendix 3

### **VOLUNTEER IN SCHOOL PROTOCOL**

Please read and sign the document below to confirm your agreement with the following school expectations as a volunteer:

#### **As a school we agree to:**

- Explain your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do with the children.
- Share the school behaviour and ethos policy with you to help you understand how we manage behaviour.
- Ensure that the children you work with behave and work well.
- Treat you with the highest respect and care.
- Share relevant information about the children you are working with.
- Let you know in advance the overall plan for the day and let you know if this changes!
- Treat anything you tell us with confidentiality.

#### **We agree not to ask you to:**

- Deal with difficult or challenging behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel unprepared to complete

**Signed:**..... **Date:** .....

**Class Teacher/Volunteer Co-ordinator/Headteacher**

**Volunteer Helper** ..... **(Printed Name)**

#### **As a volunteer helper I agree to:**

- To follow the school behaviour and ethos policy and inform the teacher if I see any inappropriate behaviour
- Inform the teacher/Designated Teacher if I observe anything that concerns me in school
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if I am unable to come into school for any reason by 8.30am in the morning
- Respect and listen to the guidance of the teacher at all times
- Complete the appropriate DBS safeguarding checks
- Disclose any criminal allegations to the Head teacher prior to starting

#### **As a volunteer helper I agree not to:**

- Look at or compare children's work, records or staff records
- Share any information about a child or member of staff with anyone outside the school staff team

**Signed:**..... **Date:** .....

## **Appendix 4**

### **SAFEWARDING INCLUDING THE PREVENT DUTY**

Everyone has a duty to keep children safe. Children may disclose information or worries at any point during the school day. It is not unusual for children to disclose information to people they feel less affiliated to and anything could trigger this.

#### **If a child says something that concerns you:**

- **DON'T make promises of secrecy**
- **DON'T ask questions of the child**
- **DON'T appear shocked or terrified but instead remain calm and reassuring**
- **DON'T delay in reporting the disclosure**
- **DO listen closely and carefully to everything the child says**
- **DO report it to one of the school's designated officers for child protection immediately**
- **DO complete a record of concern form as soon as possible noting the date, time and as close to the exact wording as you can of the child's disclosure.**

The school's designated officers for safeguarding are: **Miss Lucy Black** (Headteacher) and **Ms Emanuel** (SENCO)

#### **The Prevent Duty**

Schools also have a duty to provide a form of safeguarding to recognise children at risk of, or who may be vulnerable to, potential radicalisation. This very much follows the same procedures as above in school and should be reported in the same manner.

#### **Signs could include:**

- **Expressing extreme views regarding people of other ethnicities, cultures or faiths.**
- **Unusual or unsafe online activity.**
- **Disclosures regarding family members views or behaviours towards other ethnic groups.**
- **Signs of isolation, fear or rejection of peer groups**
- **Recent political or religious conversion**
- **Conflict with family over political or religious views**

## Appendix 5

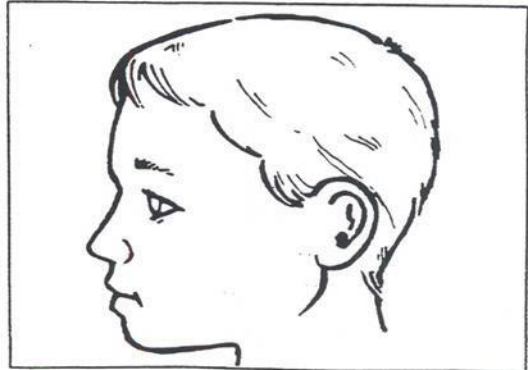
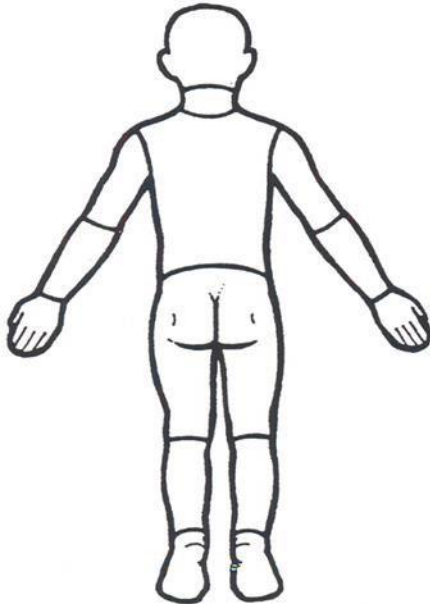
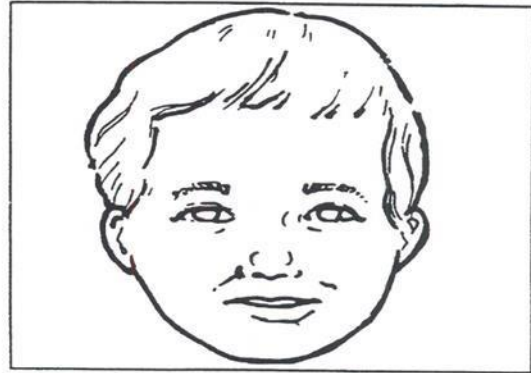
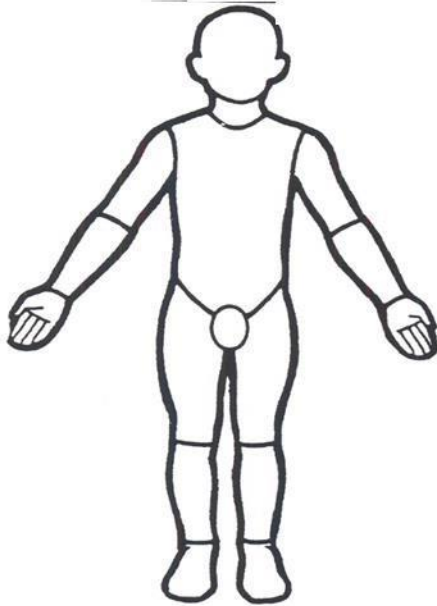
### Volunteer/Visitor Recording Form for Safeguarding Concerns

Staff, volunteers and regular visitors are required to complete this form and pass it to Miss Lucy Black or Ms Kristen Emanuel if they have a safeguarding concern about a child in our school.

<b>Information Required</b>	<b>Enter Information Here</b>
Full name of child	
Date of birth (office will complete)	
Class / Year group	
Your name and purpose of visit to the school.	
Nature of concern/disclosure <i>Please include where you were when the child made a disclosure, what you saw, who else was there, what did the child say or do and what you said.</i> <i>[Ensure that if there is an injury this is recorded (size and shape) and a body map is completed]</i> <i>[Make it clear if you have a raised a</i>	

<p><i>concern about a similar issue previously]</i></p>	
<p>Time &amp; date of incident:</p>	
<p>Person you are passing this information to?</p>	<p>Miss Lucy Black <b><i>Safeguarding Lead</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Ms Kristen Emanuel <b><i>Safeguarding Lead</i></b> <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Your Signature</p>	
<p>Time and date form completed</p>	

## Body Map



**Indicate clearly where the injury was seen and attach this to the referral form.**