

# Old Orchard Primary School



## Classroom Volunteer Handbook

To be read in conjunction with Old Orchard Primary School's;

- Volunteer Induction Handbook
- Volunteer Policy
- Photography, Filming and Recording Policy
- Communication with School Staff Policy
- Digital Technologies Policy

These are available on the [Old Orchard Primary School](#) website policies page.

Please complete this [Google Form](#) (or scan QR code) as your acknowledgement of having read and understood this Classroom Volunteer Handbook



We warmly welcome you to Old Orchard Primary School. Thank you for your offer of support. It is greatly appreciated. Whether you are listening to students read, helping with literacy, assisting with cooking activities or assisting on a school trip, the contribution you make broadens and improves the opportunities for the children in our school.

Old Orchard Primary School acknowledges the immense educational and social benefits from the voluntary help given by parents, carers and others in the community and we actively encourage partnerships between these groups and our school.

**All volunteers must have a current Working with Children Card (click [here](#) to apply for a FREE volunteers WWCC) registered at the office.**

**All volunteers must sign in and out at the office on arrival and departure.**

**All volunteers must wear a visitor's badge at all times when in the school.**

#### **Aim of the Volunteer Program:**

- To enrich the educational possibilities for our students
- To support the students in achieving the learning goals/intentions
- To promote partnerships between the home and school
- To demonstrate that education continues throughout life

#### **Confidentiality**

It is **very important** that anyone working in the school is aware of the necessity for **total confidentiality** regarding any information learned about any individual - child or adult.

Volunteers may see and hear a range of things occurring in a school. They may also overhear staff discussing learning progress or behaviour with an individual student. All information and comments made in school remain confidential to the school. Any conversation with parents about things you have observed is a breach of the school's confidence. Even innocent comments could be misunderstood. If you have any questions or concerns about something you have seen or heard, please direct them to the classroom teacher.

#### **Supervision**

It is important that a VIT registered teacher is with you at all times when you are with the students. The teacher is required to maintain a visual line of sight with you at all times.

#### **Absences**

Volunteers are asked to phone the school or email the classroom teacher directly if they cannot come into school when expected so alternative arrangements can be made.

#### **Siblings**

Some students are very easily distracted from their learning by additional noises or movement. We are able to accommodate younger siblings if they are able to participate quietly and are actively supervised by the parents (whilst also acting in their volunteer role). Please do not be offended if you are asked to remove a disruptive sibling from the classroom to enable the students in our care to achieve their learning potential. Please consider making alternative arrangements for siblings if that is an option for you.

Please also note that it is not the responsibility of the classroom teacher to provide an activity, entertainment, supervision or behaviour management of siblings in the classroom.

## **Volunteer Role**

The role of the volunteer is to help, assist and support children in their learning. This can involve various activities such as listening to individual students read, supporting a small group of children to focus on a learning task, assisting students during a school activity, etc. The teacher's role is to plan, teach, manage and assess students while fostering a positive atmosphere. If a volunteer is unsure of the expectations of their role, they should clarify with the teacher. The relationship between you and the teacher is extremely important and should be based on mutual respect. We ask that to support our classroom environment, you:

- Put your mobile phone on silent
- Leave the classroom if you need to make or answer a call
- Refrain from conversations with other adults while the children are listening to instructions.

Please understand that classroom and recess times are not appropriate times to have a parent/teacher chat. You may book an appropriate time with the classroom teacher for an alternative time.

## **Student Behaviour**

Teachers are delighted to hear about tasks that have gone well where students have responded positively. Showing your satisfaction in a task well done is encouraging to students and staff.

Volunteers should take a kind, yet firm, line with students. Always refer a student to a member of staff if the student is behaving inappropriately and failing to cooperate or follow instructions. Physical contact with students is prohibited.

## **Things to be mindful of:**

- Volunteers are not allowed to smoke in the school grounds
- Volunteers should not re-organise classroom groupings, activities or reading material
- Volunteers are not permitted to take photographs or film the students
- Volunteers are not permitted to give their group treats (such as lollies, biscuits, etc) (Stickers may be appropriate but should be discussed with the class teacher first.)

## **Working in the classroom**

When supporting a group of students, please ensure you attend to all of the children in your group, unless you have been asked to attend to one individual. Please understand that you may not be working with your child's group. You will have been placed with a group based on the needs of the classroom.

When supporting students in their learning, we ask that you encourage the children to think about their learning and the strategies they could use to complete the task. Sometimes it feels as if it may be necessary or easier to do the work for the students, however it is extremely important to foster independent learning by guiding students to complete the task themselves. The students will not develop their understanding if the answers are simply given to them.

The use of the 3Ps can assist students to complete a learning task. These are:

**Pause-** allow some time to think and apply known strategies

**Prompt-** ask 'what strategy could you use'; 'what sounds can you hear'; 'try looking at the picture'

**Praise-** the effort that the student has made.

On the following pages you will find other strategies that can be used to support students in their learning.

# Tips for Classroom Volunteers

## Reading

Always begin by asking children about the text they are going to read to you- they may have read it before or it may be new to them. Ask them some questions so that they continue to receive the message that reading is all about gathering information and/or telling a story.....

- What can you see? (refer to the front cover and the pictures in the text)
- What could be happening?
- Who is involved?
- I wonder what might happen next ...
- Why did you like this book?
- Did you learn something new?
- What was your favourite part?
- Does this remind you of another story or something you have done?

### Prompts if a child does not know a word:

- Does it look right/match? (children may use their finger to track)
- Does it sound right?
- Does it make sense?
- Check it- does it look and sound right to you?
- Go back, re-read, get ready to say the start of the word- what word would make sense and start that way?

Sometimes despite your prompting, it will be necessary to tell the child the word.

### Try to reinforce good reading behaviour:

- I like the way you fixed that- what did you notice?
- Why did you stop- what can you do?
- How did you know it was.....? What helped you?
- Try that again- (when you think the child is just about to get it right and could self-correct)
- I liked the way that sounded- just like talking! (encourages good pace, smooth phrasing and use of expression/intonation)
- I liked the way you made it match (for 1:1 matching)

Enjoy the moment- children love having 1-1 time and anything you do as a volunteer to make reading a positive experience is a valuable contribution to their education.

## Writing

Try to assist children with the composition of their writing- this may involve having a chat with them so they can get their ideas out- if a child is reluctant, some 'who, where, what, when, why and how' questions may help.

Sometimes children require help with the sequencing of their ideas- a simple plan may help. Your classroom teacher may have a process in place or you could help by prompting keywords to activate more information.

Eg        Sunday ----- Chloe's Party ----- Jumping Castle

Try to encourage the use of new vocabulary to make their writing more interesting- teachers may have displays or word books to refer to OR they may have a particular focus on 'interesting words'. Remind children to refer to classroom posters and displays when composing their own writing.

Teachers will also focus on a specific text type. There will be displays in the classroom that outline the structure required.

Always ask children to re-read their own writing – this will help them clarify what comes next and perhaps they can identify some errors independently.

If they don't know a word:

- Encourage the use of visual aids in the classroom- these may be word walls, commonly used word lists or spell check books- older children should be encouraged to use dictionaries
- Ask them to say the word aloud slowly- ask 'what can you hear?'- 'write down what you know'- then assist them if required
- Do they know another word like that one? (one that sounds the same, starts with the same letter, can they break the word into parts that they know?)
- Please avoid spelling a word out for students

## Mathematics

Getting children to understand their mathematical thinking means we need to ask the right questions. These are some prompt questions that could be used in Years 3-6.

**To make sense of mathematics:**

- How would you describe the problem in your own words?
- What information is given?
- Did anyone get a different answer?
- How did you work it out?
- Tell me what you were thinking; talk me through the steps
- Did anyone get the same answer in a different way?

**Fostering prediction**

- What would happen if .....?
- What do you think will happen next? How do you know?
- Will the outcome be the same if we use different numbers?
- Will this always be true?
- Will this always happen?

**Encouraging children to be self-reliant**

- Does your solution make sense?
- How can you check to be sure?
- What do you think you should do next?
- Can you explain this to a classmate?
- Make a model to show what it means
- What steps in the process are you most confident about?

**Cultivating reasoning**

- What is happening in this situation?
- Do you see a pattern in this? What is it?
- What other numbers will work?
- Will your strategy always work this way? How do you know?
- Describe what you tried. What might you change?
- How did you know your solution was reasonable?
- Is this an efficient strategy?
- In what ways does this problem connect to other mathematical concepts?