



We are a **'Light in the darkness'**, living life to the full, worshipping and working so that everyone may flourish and achieve their God-given potential.



Our values are  
Love (for God and each other), Independence, Generosity, Honesty and Teamwork

# School Volunteer Policy 2025

## Introduction

At St John's Meads, we welcome volunteers wishing to help in the school and value the contribution they make to enhance school life. We believe that the involvement of parents and carers, school governors and volunteers from our local community is vital in support of the children's learning.

Volunteers come to school to help with a variety of curriculum activities including outdoor learning, school trips, walking with classes in to visit the local area, library, reading, maths, art, cookery and computing. In addition we have volunteers who join the Friends (PTA).

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

## Our Volunteers include:

- Members of the Governing Body
- Parents and carers of pupils
- Ex-pupils
- Students on work experience
- University students referred to us by Student Volunteer Services
- Ex-members of staff
- Local residents
- Friends of the school
- Members of the parish and wider community

## Our Vision

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and achieve their God-given potential.

*The light shines  
in the darkness,  
and the darkness  
has not overcome it.*

**John 1:5**

At St John's Meads, we have strong links with our local church St John's and to other local churches in Eastbourne. We aim to preserve and develop the religious character of the school in accordance with the principles of the Church of England. We aim to serve our community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. We explore beliefs and experience; respect faiths, feelings and values; enjoy learning about ourselves and others and the surrounding world, using imagination, creativity and reflection.



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## Procedures

When a volunteer arrives in the school, they must sign in at the school office (please bring a recent photo and ID on your first visit as a volunteer and an ID badge will be made for you) stating which class/person you will be supporting. Volunteers must also sign out when 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 volunteer ID badge will be made for you and should be worn at all times when volunteering in school. Please let the school office know if you have any allergies or medical conditions which the school should be aware of for your own health and safety.

## Safeguarding

- As part of our commitment to safeguarding volunteers will be asked to attend an informal interview to ensure that the aims and intentions of the school and the volunteer are compatible.
- The Headteacher 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 who have regular contact with children. In order for you to work in school as a volunteer, you will need to complete an Enhanced DBS online check at the school office, complete and return a Disqualification under the Childcare Act Declaration Form, and provide two character references from referees who have known you for 5 years or more. 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.
- Your information will be held on the Single Central Record (SCR).

## Becoming a Volunteer in School

All volunteers will be asked to attend an Induction Meeting which will cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- First Aid
- Child Protection
- Fire Safety and Emergency Procedures
- Child Protection
- Safeguarding including the Prevent Duty
- Health & Safety
- Pupil Behaviour Policy

All volunteers will have access to the school policies and paper copies can be supplied on request.

## Confidentiality

- Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality
- Any concerns that Volunteers have about the children they work with and come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher and NOT with the parents of the child or persons outside school
- Comments regarding children's behaviour or learning can be highly sensitive, and if taken out of context, can cause distress to the parents of a child if they hear about such issues through a third party rather than directly from the school.

**Volunteers who are concerned about anything another adult in the school does or says should raise the matter with the Headteacher.**





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## Supervision

- All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher of the class to which they are assigned. Teachers retain responsibility for children at all times, including the children's behaviour and the activity they are undertaking.
- Volunteers should have clear guidance from the teacher as to how an activity is carried out and what the expected outcome of an activity is.
- Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice / guidance from the teacher in the event of any query or problem regarding children's understanding of a task or behaviour.

## Health & Safety Policy

The school's Health and Safety Policy is available on our school website and from the school office to Volunteers working in the school.

The class teacher is to ensure that Volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. fire alarm evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with a particular task (e.g. using DT equipment /accompanying children on visits).

Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher in the first instance.

## Child Protection

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in our care.

**All volunteers must hold an Enhanced DBS Disclosure before they can help at school.**

All volunteers are expected to have read Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education KCSiE and to have signed and returned the proof of reading.

## Complaints Procedure

A volunteer should follow the school's complaints procedure.

**The Headteacher reserves the right to take the following action:**

- To speak with a Volunteer about a breach of the Volunteer Agreement and seek reassurance that this will not happen again;
- Offer an alternative placement for a Volunteer, e.g. helping with another activity or in another class;
- Inform the Volunteer that the school no longer wishes to use them. The full Complaints Procedure is available from the school office.

## Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually in September.



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## Appendix 1

### Volunteer Guidance

Thank you very much for volunteering to help at St John's Meads. The following are a set of guidelines, which we hope will help to establish a successful partnership between staff and volunteers at the school.

- Teachers work hard to plan lessons and direct learning in advance. If you are unsure of the purpose of the activity you have been asked to assist with please clarify it with the teacher or teaching assistant at the start of the session.
- If you are committed to helping on a regular basis and for any reason are unable to attend on a day when you are expected, please inform the teacher or the school office in advance.
- If your help is not required on a particular day (due to a trip or other school activity) then the teacher will provide you with advance notice of this.
- Helping in the school that contains your own child will give you an insight into his or her education. Should you have any questions that arise out of this please direct them to the class teacher privately on a separate occasion, through Parent/Teacher consultation evenings, or through the other channels that already exist within the school.
- When you are working with the children it is important to create an atmosphere that makes the children want to learn. Enthusiasm and encouragement are extremely important in helping with development.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education: If a child discloses something that you feel is of concern but you might not know the relevance of, you should report this to a member of the Safeguarding Team of DSLs (Designated Safeguarding Leads).
- The DSL will advise you of the appropriate procedure.
- Confidentiality regarding what might be seen, heard or discussed within the class by children or adults is extremely important. School staff are bound by the rule of confidentiality that as a volunteer will also apply to you. Please do not discuss any issues that might arise in class with anyone other than the class teacher who is best placed to decide on the correct course of action.
- Volunteers will in no way discriminate on the grounds of age, gender, race or religion, sex or sexual orientation.
- During breaks from the classroom, that are agreed with the teacher, please feel free to use The Ark. Please help yourself to tea and coffee in The Ark – if it is in use please inform office staff, who will help you.

You will be aware that legislation requires all people working with 'vulnerable members of society', whether in a professional or a voluntary capacity, need to have a DBS clearance. All our volunteers complete the DBS application through the school before they are able to work alongside the pupils and will be asked to provide names of 2 referees who will be contacted to obtain character references.

Thank you very much for volunteering your time, effort and enthusiasm to help in school. You can be assured that your help is greatly appreciated and will be of genuine help to both children and staff alike.





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## Appendix 2

### Volunteer Agreement

Please read and sign this Volunteer Agreement and return it to the school office.

I have received a copy of the School's Volunteer Policy and Guidelines and GDPR Privacy Notice.

I will not use my mobile phone for any reason while in the school building.

I agree to support the School's Vision, Aims and Values.

I agree to treat information I learn from being a Volunteer in School as confidential.

I understand that I am required to hold a DBS Enhanced Enclosure and that I will be asked to complete an application before I can start to work in school alongside pupils.

The school will ask you to name 2 referees to act as a character reference. The information you provide will be kept secure.

(Please note that the school will ask you to bring some ID and evidence of Right to Work in the UK and documentation with proof of address. The application for a volunteer DBS is free of charge to the volunteer).

I have confirm I have read Keeping Children Safe in Education Part 1

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Appendix 3

#### VOLUNTEER INFORMATION – To help us use your skills appropriately

Name of Volunteer: .....

Address:.....

.....

Telephone:.....

What skills / areas would you like to help with in school?

.....

.....

Please circle days you would be most able to help.

Mon            Tue            Wed            Thu            Fri

Are there any particular age groups / classes you would like to work with?

.....

Do you have any disabilities / other needs we need to take into account when working as a Volunteer in school? (please give details)

.....

Thank you for taking time to complete this Volunteer Information

[office@sjm.academy](mailto:office@sjm.academy)

<https://sjm.academy>

Headteacher: Mrs Shevlyn Byroo



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