



Mission Statement

A Caring Christian Family Where we Grow Together

STUDENT AND VOLUNTEER HELPERS POLICY

Effective Date: 01/04/2017

Review Date: Sept 2022 Biennial

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Persons Responsible for Policy:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT
Approval Date	01/04/2017
Signed:	Director RCSAT
Signed:	Executive Headteacher RCSAT

1. Introduction

- 1.1. RCSAT believes that our schools should be open and welcoming to all who would like to support the children and wants to encourage parents and other adults to help teachers in a variety of ways.
- 1.2. RCSAT's overriding concern is for the safety of the children in our care.
- 1.3. This document sets out our school's policy, which is to ensure that the children benefit from as much help and support as possible and are provided at the same time with the best possible security.

2. Volunteers

- 2.1. RCSAT's volunteers may include:
 - 2.1.1. Members of the Governing Body
 - 2.1.2. Parents of pupils
 - 2.1.3. Ex-pupils
 - 2.1.4. Students on work experience
 - 2.1.5. University students referred to us by Student Volunteer Services
 - 2.1.6. Local residents
 - 2.1.7. Friends of the school
- 2.2. The types of activities that Volunteers are engaged include:
 - 2.2.1. Hearing children read
 - 2.2.2. Working with small groups of children
 - 2.2.3. Working alongside individual children
 - 2.2.4. Undertaking art and craft activities with children
 - 2.2.5. Running after-school clubs e.g. dancing
 - 2.2.6. Working with children on the computers
 - 2.2.7. Accompanying school visits
 - 2.2.8. Addressing areas of development highlighted in the School Improvement Plan
 - 2.2.9. Supporting pupils who need have been identified by the Inclusion Team as Needing additional support
 - 2.2.10. Providing positive role models and one to one support.

3. Aims

- 3.1. To support pupils in their learning.
- 3.2. To ensure that volunteers/parents are welcomed and valued as members of the school community.

4. What Volunteers need to know

- 4.1. RCSAT would like to extend our thanks to all our parent/volunteer helpers. At our schools, we value the help we receive from parents/volunteers enormously and realise that we would be unable to provide such quality experiences for the children without your time and expertise.
- 4.2. To begin the process we ask that volunteers complete and return a volunteer interest form to the school they wish to work in
- 4.3. For the children's safety, all volunteer helpers are required to have vetting clearance before they work in school. They are asked to complete a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) which is then sent for clearance. 1 reference will also be taken up before volunteering can commence. We also ensure that volunteers are known to the school or come through a reputable institution e.g. the local High School or University.
- 4.4. We know that for parents/volunteers to be happy and comfortable helping in school we need to share some important skills and information with you.
- 4.5. All volunteers will meet with a member of the school's senior management team, who will explain relevant Health and Safety policies, Safeguarding procedures, whistle blowing and staff conduct policies and what to do in the case of a fire.
- 4.6. Volunteers will need to provide simple information about their next of kin and any health problems we need to be aware of.



- 4.7. When helpers arrive in the school they must sign in at the school office. They will be given a visitor's badge, which they should wear at all times. The signing-in sheet will give the date and time of arrival. Visitors will also be presented with a leaflet outlining the main the main Health and Safety / Safeguarding points.
- 4.8. They must also sign out, stating the time they are leaving and return their badge before they leave.
- 4.9. It is the policy of the school to ask parents not to support in their own child's classroom, as this can be distracting for the child and perhaps can place the class teacher in a difficult situation. Helpers will be asked to support in classes where there is the most need.
- 4.10. There will be occasions when the Principal declines to accept the help of a parent/volunteer if she believes it will not be in the best interests of the school community and a teacher must always have the last word on what happens in a classroom.
- 4.11. We also know that for staff and parents of other children to be confident about the role of the parent/volunteer helper you need to agree to a protocol about confidentiality and conduct – as do all staff who work in schools. We will ask you to sign this to indicate your agreement and a copy will be kept in school.
- 4.12. Use of IT agreements and in some cases disqualification declarations will need to be signed and kept on file in school for you
- 4.13. There are lots of things we need help with in school. Some activities are in class with the children and some are out of class. Some are outdoor activities and some are making resources.
- 4.14. Volunteers MUST let the teaching staff know of any inappropriate behaviour. If you let it go the children will learn that it is alright to behave less well for some people than others. That will make everyone's job harder and the child is less likely to develop a strong sense of respect!
- 4.15. The teaching staff will also talk with you about the standard of learning they expect from the children so you can expect the same.
- 4.16. At all schools we aim to make learning as exciting as we can so often lessons will be practical and that's when we need most help. Having an adult to challenge the learning is very helpful. Being able to ask the children open questions is a great skill and brings out the thinking in children e.g. I wonder what would happen if we put it the other way up? Why do you think it does that? Where has that answer come from? How did you find that out?
- 4.17. Helping to clear up is an essential part of learning too. We want all children to see clearing up as a natural part of the activity. A helper should never be the one who clears everything away – which would give negative messages to the children about your role and about their responsibilities.
- 4.18. Children learn some things very quickly from the actions, words and attitude of the people around them, their role models. They are not always the things we plan for them to learn in the classroom e.g. they pick up good manners from the adults at home and from the adults in school. Therefore, it's important that all our own behaviours in school are always those we want the children to copy.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1. The most sensitive issue around parent helpers in school is confidentiality. Parents hand their children over to the school for the best part of every week day trusting that they are safe and that their progress and welfare will be treated with complete confidentiality. It is therefore essential that anyone helping in school respects that confidentiality and follows the protocols. This school is a very trusting school and so we welcome you all in your offers of help. Volunteers all need to be able to trust the school and when you are helping in school you are part of the school.
- 5.2. There are other things as well as children's progress that need to be kept confidential. Some children have medical needs to which we have to attend – perhaps an allergy or a condition that affects their daily learning. Some families have complex circumstances which mean that a child is not able to join in some activities. Some children may be experiencing a traumatic time at home and their behaviour in school may be affected.
- 5.3. As a helper in school you may be asked by other parents about their own or other children. It is not appropriate to pass this information without first discussing it with the class or Principal.



- 5.4. Parents/Volunteers are welcome in our staffroom (during morning and afternoon break times). Should you hear any information pertaining to the children this should be kept in the strictest confidence.
- 5.5. It is also possible that a child will tell you something which is very worrying. Please always refer any concern immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead .

6. The Roles of the Parent/Volunteer Helper in School

- 6.1. There are so many things that we need you to help with but some of them are listed as:
 - 6.1.1. Assisting with design and technology work – cutting, sticking, sewing, sawing, nailing, constructing. There are lots of skills which children need on to one teaching with and guidance as they practise them.
 - 6.1.2. Art work in class often requires more adult support. They need help with colour mixing, layering materials, practising techniques with paint or clay, constructing sculptures, learning batik skills, textile work etc.
 - 6.1.3. Practical maths and science lessons benefit from parent helper support. Children need reminding of the task, guiding with the next steps, questioning in the right way to make them think. They also need to be regularly referred to the learning objective. For the class teacher to be with every group is not possible so another adult in class improves the quality of learning for all the children.
 - 6.1.4. Literacy support during language lessons enables some children to be more successful than they might be without adult intervention. Children often need to hear the instructions over a few times, or to have a task broken down into smaller steps for them, or to have someone close by to encourage them to stay on task or to reassure them that they are doing the right thing. Small groups or individuals benefit greatly from one to one support.
 - 6.1.5. Learning games – some of the most effective learning for children happens when children are playing a game and so we use lots of games in maths and literacy. An adult supporting the game is very helpful for the children and the teacher.
 - 6.1.6. Listening to children reading – this is a skill which has many levels and parents input can make a big difference to children’s progress.
 - 6.1.7. Accompanying the children on educational visits enables the school to meet its legal requirements in terms of adult-pupil ratios and allows adult helpers to be part of their special times.

7. Review

- 7.1. The governing body reviews this policy every two years.
- 7.2. The governors may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the governing body receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

