

Thank you for volunteering to help our children in school. We believe that the involvement of parents and carers in children's education is vital and we encourage active participation in many ways. Some parents come to school to help with a variety of tasks such as art, cooking and especially reading and usually work with individuals or small groups in specific classes. Other parents help when the children are taken on educational visits outside school or get involved with the work of our parent's association.

The aim of these guidelines is to give you all the information you need to make your time both worthwhile and enjoyable.

Thank you for your support!

## **Vision**

At Robert Peel Primary School our vision is to develop confident, resilient and independent learners who are able to communicate effectively with others. Our aim is for the children to be happy in all aspects of school life and for them to aspire to be the best they can be.

We will achieve this by creating a culture of independent learning and discovery that is stimulating and enjoyable for both children and staff. The children's views will be sought and valued and high expectations will ensure that all children achieve even when challenged.

## **Learning Behaviours**

Through our work we promote our Learning Behaviours of:

### **Aspiration**

"I can set and review my own targets for learning." "I can see where my work will lead me." "I know when a piece of work has been completed to the best of my ability." "I am happy to make changes from original ideas."

### **Independence**

"I can choose and use equipment needed for a set task." "I do not allow myself to get distracted easily." "I can follow my own line of enquiry." "I enjoy taking responsibility." "I can think about more than one way to solve a problem."

### **Confidence**

"I give my best effort in everything I do." "I am happy to give an opinion and explain it." "I know that by working hard I will be successful." "I am willing to have a go at something new."

### **Happiness**

"I ask lots of questions." "I use my imagination and share my thoughts with others." "I have lots of ideas that I am happy to share." "I am involved in clubs or groups." "I am happy to work with different children or on my own."

### **Communication Skills**

"I am able to put my point of view across in a positive way." "I can express myself using complete sentences." "I can hold the attention of listeners by adapting the way I talk." "I can participate fully in paired and group discussions." "I ask questions to clarify or develop my understanding."

### **Resilience**

"I keep going even if something is hard." "I don't mind making a mistake as I can learn from it." "I am able to say what went well and what I could do better next time." "I keep pushing towards my targets even if I find it hard at times." "I can use trial and error to work through a problem."



### **Safeguarding Checks**

We carry out a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check for all staff and volunteers who have regular contact with children. 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. This is a quick and easy process and is completed in school. If you require a check to be completed then please make an appointment with the School Business Manager.

The school's Designated Safeguarding Officers are Miss Ganney (Headteacher) and Mr James (Deputy Head). If you have any concerns regarding the safety of any pupil then please speak to one of the school's safeguarding officers.

### **Data Protection**

We place the highest importance on safeguarding all personal details relating to pupils and staff. In accordance with our Data Protection procedures and Privacy Notices only basic information will be shared with you – pupil's first names. At no time is this information to be removed from school or shared with others outside of school. If this occurs this would be a breach in our procedures and this will be reported to the appropriate body and your volunteering may cease. Therefore it is essential that all volunteers take their role in protecting children's data seriously and follow the guidelines set out by staff.

### **Confidentiality**

It is very important that all staff, parent volunteers and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality. 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.

As part of our expectations of confidentiality, at no time should comments about what has been seen or observed in school be shared on any Social Media sites.

### **Health and Safety**

The Health and Safety policy is available in the staffroom. If you have an accident or a near miss in school please ensure that this is entered in the accident book in the office. Please report any health and safety concerns to the school office.

### **Security**

When you are helping in school please make sure that you sign the visitors' book when you arrive and leave; this is important in case the fire alarm rings. Visitors' badges which are issued when signing in should be worn at all times when in school.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones should be on silent whilst helping in school and should be put in a safe place during your time in school. At no time should mobile phones be used to take photos of the children including your own child and they are only to be used in the office area and staffroom.

### **Parent and Carer Helper Guidelines**

Occasionally children become a little unsettled when their parents are working with other children in the classroom. Most children soon get used to their parent helping in class and settle down after a few weeks. If this does not happen we may ask you to help in a different class for a while. This is entirely at the staff'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.



Sometimes we may ask you to support another class if extra adults are required for an activity (e.g. supporting practical activities).

- Please don't have favourites - it is important that all children in school are given equal time and attention.
- Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.
- Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.
- If a child does or tells you something that causes you concern, please tell the class teacher or Headteacher as soon as possible after the disclosure in an appropriate setting so that others cannot overhear.
- 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.

### **What are the key points when working with children?**

- It is vital to encourage the children to talk about what they are doing in order to support them in using the correct vocabulary.
- There is no rush. We give the children plenty of time to complete a task and they will often need to return to it over several occasions.
- Always encourage the children to do things for themselves. It is important that they are independent and although they need help and supervision, the end result should always be their own work. Please don't be tempted to do the work for them! The learning that goes on while the children are doing an activity is often much more important than the end product!
- When playing games with the children, try and encourage the idea of taking turns, sharing and being a good loser. The real joy of a game is the taking part!

### **What kind of activities might you be engaged in?**

**We might ask you to become involved in a variety of activities such as:**

- Sharing books;
- Working on the computer;
- Playing games;
- Making things;
- Cooking;
- Gardening;
- Sewing;
- Topic related studies;
- Coming with us on visits;
- Sometimes just being there is what is needed!

**Many of the activities that we ask you to help with are the sorts of things that you do with your own children at home.**

The teacher will give you:

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

Afterwards it is very helpful if you can talk to the teacher about how the activity went and how you got on. Please ask if there is anything that you are not sure about or if you need help.

### **What does 'sharing books with children' mean?**

**A few quick pointers to help you when you are asked to read or share a book with a child:**

- The teacher will indicate whether you should read to the child or the child should read to you. If this is not clear, ask.
- If the child appears 'stuck', tell them gently to use their phonics and 'sound it out' or encourage a sensible guess based on what has already been read or look at the illustrations for clues, and if all else fails, tell them the word. Quite often a lack of confidence will inhibit them from making an attempt and their fear of 'getting it wrong' may result in silence.
- Encourage the child to predict what might happen next and discuss how they feel about the story and characters.
- Make the experience an enjoyable one, sharing your love of books with the child. This is a moment of quality time for you both.



- Please do not move the child onto another box from the reading scheme. If a child has done particularly well in their reading, please be sure to share this with the class teacher. Equally, please let the teacher know about any problems.

### **Parent Helper and Volunteer Agreement**

#### **Parent helpers and volunteers are expected to:**

- Be outstanding role models for all pupils.
- Work under the professional direction of staff, following school policies.
- Report any issues of concern to teachers (and not directly intervene).
- Allow the teachers to deal with discipline issues that arise.
- Speak in a kind and friendly way to all pupils.
- Adhere to the schools Data Protection Policy.
- Not engage in any dialogue related to the work of the school on Social Media.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Establish and maintain a rapport with pupils based on mutual respect.
- Contact the teacher if they are unable to attend.

#### **Parent helpers and Volunteers have the right to expect:**

- Work to be prepared and the teacher organised.
- Good manners and acceptable behaviour from pupils.
- To be treated with respect.
- The teacher to deal with discipline issues that arise.
- Support from the teacher.
- Careful explanations of the tasks expected.
- To be notified if sessions are cancelled or the timetable changes.

#### **As teacher, parents and community members, we expect:**

- Our children to be respected.
- Our children to be safe and to feel secure.
- Our children to be protected from inappropriate behaviour and language.

### **Housekeeping**

#### **Tea / Coffee arrangements**

If you are in school over the break period, there are tea and coffee making facilities for visitors in the staffroom which you are welcome to use.

#### **Photocopier**

The photocopiers are located in the staffroom and resources area. You may be asked to use these machines to support the class teacher in preparing resources. Please ask in the school office if you are unsure of how to use them!

#### **First Aid**

Please do not administer First Aid to children whilst you are volunteering in school. A number of staff hold certificates for paediatric first aid and first aid at work. Please talk to the class teacher in the first instance if a child has a bump etc.

#### **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). The Fire Assembly Area is at the end of the playground where children line up in their class.



### **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 volunteers.

- Parents may not always have their own child in their group.
- The teacher will give 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 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.
- 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 Headteacher on return from the trip.

### **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.***