

Bell's Brae Primary School



Adult Helpers Policy

September 2013

Introduction

The Shetland Schools Service actively encourages the involvement of parents/carers and other members of the community in enhancing experiences of children and young people within its schools. It is recognised in *The Scottish Schools (Parental Involvement) Act 2006*, that when parents/carers are involved, children do better in their education.

The staff at Bell's Brae Primary School work positively to promote an ethos of partnership within our school. Such involvement by parents/carers and other members of our community, appropriately directed will benefit the whole school community, both enriching the curriculum and encouraging a wider understanding of schools and the education system in general.

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved we have drawn up the following procedures:

1. Adult Helpers Policy
2. Classroom Helpers Procedures for Teachers (appendix 1)
3. Classroom Helpers Guidelines (appendix 2)
4. Example School Letter / Volunteer Form for Helpers (appendix 3)

1 Adult Helpers Policy

Disclosure Scotland

When working with children it is imperative that the strictest standards of health and safety are maintained. The following is taken from the SIC's Policy on the Disclosure of Criminal Record Information 2006:

Volunteers

Where there is to be regular contact with children and in a supervisory capacity Enhanced Disclosure Checks **must be** done e.g. trips, assisting in the classroom, swimming. The grey area is around PTA/Parent Council activities such as coffee mornings, fetes etc where there is not necessarily direct supervision of children. Decisions to do Enhanced Disclosure Checks for these events should be based on Risk Assessment, with the key questions being:

- Do helpers have unsupervised contact with children, other than their own?
- Are these activities regular?

Guidelines For Using Outside Agencies And Visitors in schools: "Where a volunteer does not require a Disclosure Check, then arrangements should be made to treat the volunteer as an infrequent visitor to school, and the Schools Service Guidelines for Visitors to Schools should be used".

Responsibility and Discipline:

The role of the helper is one of support to the class teacher. However, the teacher remains responsible for all pupils. While the teacher may delegate some authority to the helper, for example within a group work situation, ultimate responsibility for discipline lies with the teacher at all times. We expect children to behave with the same respect and politeness to any visitors/helpers in the school, as they would staff members.

Confidentiality:

It is essential that all helpers appreciate and support the necessity for confidentiality. Discussion on the guidelines surrounding conduct and confidentiality must take place prior to helpers spending time in school. In addition to this helpers must sign a "helpers in school" agreement, detailing that they have read and understood the guidelines.

Involvement of helpers in class is an optional arrangement and as such will be undertaken only if the individual class teacher feels comfortable about doing so. As this arrangement is by mutual agreement, both staff and helpers should be aware that it can be terminated at any point should this be felt necessary.

We are keen to ensure that time spent in school by helpers is as enjoyable and beneficial as possible. We endeavour to involve helpers as fully as possible in school life whilst ensuring safe boundaries for all involved.

Helpers in school: Procedures for staff

In accordance with our policy, we welcome involvement in school life by parents/carers and other interested members of the community. The following procedures for staff should ensure that there is clarity as regards the roles and responsibilities of all involved, being mindful of Child Protection Procedures.

- Prior to a helper starting a session/sessions they will meet with a member of staff and be given a copy of our guidelines. The member of staff will talk them through the guidelines, discussing and answering any queries. The helper will be asked to sign an agreement acknowledging that they have read and agree to work within the guidelines laid down, particularly regarding confidentiality.
- A helper will be shown round the school, the staffroom, toilets, and break/lunch times will be explained. The helper will have the fire procedures and first aid procedures explained to them.
- A helper may be assigned a task with or without children within the school. If with children, the teacher will ensure that the group is of a manageable size. The teacher will explain any given task, being clear as to what is expected of the helper e.g. supervising a craft activity, tidying up at the end of the activity etc.
- Children will be expected to behave with courtesy and politeness and the teacher retains responsibility for discipline. The teacher will explain to the helper what the expectation of children's behaviour is, including the classroom code of conduct.
- A helper may be asked to do preparatory/secretarial type duties outwith the classroom. Such activities would usually be undertaken alone or with another helper, again the teacher will carefully explain what is required.
- At the end of a session involving a helper the teacher will express thanks on behalf of the school.
- A helper may only be left alone with a group of children if they have completed a Disclosure Check.
- A helper should not be left alone with a single child.

Helpers in School: Procedures for volunteers

We welcome parents/carers and friends to become involved in school life, particularly to share interests, experiences or skills with the children.

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved we have drawn up the following guidelines:

Do:

- sign in when you arrive at school
- ensure you are clear as to your role and that you have discussed the activities to be carried out with a teacher and filled in a "Helpers" form
- work at the children's level - both in conversation and in physical size
- discuss the task in hand and keep the children focussed
- encourage children to adhere to class/school rules
- help children finish and tidy up after a task
- direct a child to the teacher if you are unsure of something
- encourage independence, use questions such as "what do you think you should do next?"
- encourage children to work quietly, reinforce this by using a quiet voice yourself
- encourage children to move quietly and calmly within the school without running

Don't:

- take individual children out of the room and never accompany them to the toilet
- help a child change their clothes whilst alone with them
- hold on to or strike a child
- reprimand a child verbally or physically - if you are unhappy about a child's behaviour alert the teacher

If at any time you are in any way uncertain as to what is expected of you or how to deal with a child or situation do not hesitate to approach the teacher immediately.

Becoming a Helper at School

I would be interested in becoming a Helper in School in the following way(s)

	Tick
A single visit to discuss an item of interest or offer a particular skill e.g. what life was like when a grandparent was a child, helping plant trees, helping with a coffee afternoon etc.	
Secretarial type duties - photocopying, helping with displays etc.	
Gardening	
Baking / craft activities.	
Assisting with school trips.	
Supporting an after school club	
Other (please state)	

I would be willing to be Disclosure checked.

I already have an Education and Community Services Disclosure Check

Number (if known): -----

Date of check:-----

I am available on the following days and times:

Printed Name_____

Child's Name_____

Signed _____

Date_____

Please give this to the Head teacher

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is of extreme importance that everyone working within the school adheres to strict standards of confidentiality - what you see or hear in school regarding any child should remain within the confines of the school. However, we ask if you hear or see anything of a sensitive nature (from or about any child) which causes you concern, please discuss it with the teacher or Head Teacher before you leave.

As stated previously these guidelines are to ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of all concerned. If you feel that you can work within these guidelines, please fill in and sign the form below.

Thank you for being involved and participating. We hope you enjoy helping us!

I have read, understand and agree to work within the School Guidelines for "Helpers in School"

Printed name _____

Signed _____

Date _____

