



Parent Helper Handbook

Fleet Infant School

Guidelines for volunteering at school

Contact Information :

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🌐 www.fleet.hants.sch.uk

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Welcome from our Headteacher

A warm welcome to our Parent Helpers



Dear Parent Helpers,

Thank you for choosing to volunteer your time and support our school. We really value the contribution our parent helpers make to our school life. Whether you are listening to children read, supporting a classroom activity, helping on a school trip, preparing resources or lending a hand at a special event, your time, enthusiasm and support make a real difference to our children.

As a Parent Helper, you become an important part of our wider school community. By spending time with our children, you share in our commitment to creating a safe, happy and supportive environment where every child feels respected, included and valued.

This booklet is here to give you a **helpful introduction to volunteering in our school**. It explains some of the key expectations, procedures and responsibilities that apply when you are helping out. It is intended as a practical guide and does not replace the school's policies and procedures.

You won't be expected to know everything, and if you are ever unsure about something, please ask. Our staff are always happy to offer guidance and support.

Thank you again for being part of our school community and for offering your time and support to help us create a safe, nurturing and positive environment where every child can thrive.

Mrs Chapman

**Headteacher
Fleet Infant School**

• **Respect** • **Kindness** • **Honesty** • **Resilience** • **Courage** • **Gratitude**



Supporting Children with their Learning

Our parent volunteers are a valued part of our school community. The time, skills, enthusiasm and support you bring enrich the experiences of our children and make a positive difference to school life.

Your contribution at our school is very valuable

Whether you volunteer regularly or occasionally, your contribution is greatly appreciated and helps us to create a welcoming, supportive and inspiring environment for every child.

Having a supportive adult nearby can help children feel more confident and engaged in their learning. As a Parent Helper, you can encourage children to stay focused, show interest in what they are doing and gently redirect them if their attention starts to wander. This can be particularly helpful when the teacher is working with another group.

Rather than giving children the answers, you can help them think things through for themselves. A little encouragement and thoughtful questioning can help children develop their own strategies for approaching a task and solving problems.

It can be helpful to ask children to explain, in their own words, what they have been asked to do. This reinforces the teacher's instructions and gives children the opportunity to think about their next steps.

By encouraging children to have a go, think independently and persevere when something feels challenging, you are helping them to develop confidence and become more independent learners.

The difference you can make

Your presence in school provides children with additional opportunities to talk, listen and share their ideas with a trusted adult. Children have lots to say, and taking the time to listen to them can give us valuable insight into their thoughts, feelings and experiences. A friendly, interested adult can make a real difference to a child's confidence and sense of being heard.

Your support can also help the classroom run smoothly. By helping with routine tasks, such as organising resources, sticking work into books, displaying children's work, preparing materials or sharpening pencils, you can allow teachers to focus their time and attention where it is needed most - supporting children's learning.

We also value the skills, knowledge, experience and enthusiasm that our parent helpers bring. Whether you have a passion for reading, or simply enjoy spending time with children, your contribution can help enrich the learning environment and add to the wider life of our school community.



Confidentiality & Professional Conduct

We really appreciate the time and support that our parent volunteers give to the school. When you volunteer, you become part of our wider school community and may see or hear information about children and families that is private or confidential. We ask that you always treat this information with care and discretion.

Confidentiality

You may sometimes become aware of things about a child that are not appropriate to discuss with others. Please do not share or discuss this information with other parents, family members or on social media. If something you see or hear in school concerns you, please speak directly to the class teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead or Headteacher.

If another parent asks you about their child's progress or how they are getting on in school, please direct them to the class teacher. You are very welcome to talk about the activities you have been helping with, but questions about an individual child's learning, behaviour or wellbeing should always be answered by a member of the school staff.

If you are helping in your child's class, please remember that your role is to support the teacher and **all** the children, rather than your own child. There may be times when you are asked to work with other children while your own child works independently. This is intentional and gives your child the opportunity to develop their confidence and independence.

Please support your child in the same way as you would any other child when you are volunteering, and allow the teacher to guide how and where you are most needed.

Please do not look through children's books, trays or belongings unless the teacher has specifically asked you to do so. Even if you are looking for your own child's work.

Tips when helping in your child's class

It is a good idea to prepare your child for your first visit to the class and establish a few ground rules – for example:

- *When I am in your class you must carry on with your work and do as your teacher says.*
- *You may need to wait your turn before working on my table or in my group*
- *You must behave sensibly when you are with me or you may not be able to be in my group*
- *I will be helping other children.*
- *When it is time to go you need to say goodbye and then get on with your work.*

Working in the same classroom as your child can take a little getting used to. Most children quickly accept that their parent is there to help and continue with their learning as normal. There may be occasions when your child finds your presence distracting or responds differently when you are in the classroom. If this happens, please speak to the class teacher so that we can work together to find the best approach.

If volunteering in your child's class is proving difficult for either of you, we may suggest an alternative arrangement, such as helping in another class or working with a different group of children. We want volunteering to be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for everyone.



Creating a Positive Learning Environment

Responding to the children

We have high expectations of our children in terms of their work and behaviour. These expectations are shared with the children. Our aim is to create a positive ethos where every child feels valued and tries to do his/her best. **Positive reinforcement and praise are key to the way we work with the children.**

Occasionally, a child may not respond appropriately to you, the task or another child. If a child does not respond to your gentle reminders, please seek support from the class teacher. This is not a failure; **knowing when to ask for help is an important part of being a Parent Helper.**

Encouraging independent learning

The questions and prompts below are suggestions to help you support children with their learning. They can be used to encourage children to think for themselves, talk through their ideas and develop their own ways of approaching tasks and problems. Not every child will need this level of support, so use the prompts flexibly and allow children time to think and have a go for themselves.

The same approach can also be used at home, helping children to build confidence, develop resilience and become increasingly independent learners.

- What are you learning about? (*Can the children explain the task in their own words?*)
- Why are you learning about that? (*What is the purpose of the task?*)
- What equipment do you need?
- What do you think you need to do first?

- What will you do next? (*Can the children sequence the steps for completing the learning?*)
- Have you done anything like this before?
- How will you know when you've finished your learning? (*What will the completed activity look like?*)
- Can you explain what you are doing?
- Why are you doing it like this?
- What will you do next?

Praise the child for their efforts and achievements so far. Comment on what he/she is actually doing, e.g. I like the way...So you are doing this first before you...That's a good idea...

- Now that you've finished your learning, what do you think is good about it
- Might you have done it differently? How?
- Did it take you as long as you thought?
- What new things did you learn?
- Can you think of a different situation when you could do something similar?

When the children are completing an activity, **our focus is on the skills they are learning and acquiring** rather than the end product. **Children should be praised for their effort and engagement** even if you perceive the outcome to be less than perfect. The teacher will value the children's efforts and will deal with errors and/or misconceptions at the appropriate time.



Safeguarding and Child Protection

When working in our school, you have a duty of care towards the children here. This means that at all times you should act in a way that is consistent with their safety and welfare. **If at any time you have a concern about a child or young person, particularly if you think they may be at risk of abuse or neglect, it is your responsibility to share that concern with the DSL or DDSL's.**



Fleet Infant School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.



Mrs Heather Chapman
Headteacher



Mrs Jane Tarling
Deputy Headteacher



Mrs Helen Hutchison
Class Teacher



Miss Jorja Brown
Class Teacher

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):

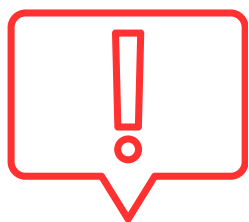
- Heather Chapman

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSL):

- Jane Tarling
- Helen Hutchison
- Jorja Brown

The DSL and DDSL's can be contacted at the school either by:

- T: 01252613582
- e-mail info@fleet.hants.sch.uk



Everybody who works with our children has a duty to safeguard them. If a child discloses information to you, or you notice signs of any form of abuse, please report your concerns immediately. Child protection matters are treated sensitively by trained members of staff but prompt action is of the utmost importance.

This is not an exhaustive list but concerns may be as a result of:

- observing a physical injury, which you think may have been non-accidental
- observing something in the appearance of a child or young person which suggests they are not being sufficiently well cared for
- observing behaviour that leads you to be concerned about a child or young person
- a child or young person telling you that they have been subjected to some form of abuse

In any of the circumstances listed above, you must write down what you saw or heard, date and sign your account, and give it to the DSL or to a DDSL. It is important to understand that legal action against a perpetrator can be seriously damaged by any suggestion that the child has been led in anyway.

If a child talks to you about abuse, you should follow the guidelines below:

- Rather than directly questioning the child, just listen and be supportive.
- Never stop a child who is freely recalling significant events, but don't push them to tell you more than they wish.
- Make it clear that you will need to pass on information to school staff who may be able to help. Do not promise confidentiality.
- You are obliged to share any information relating to abuse or neglect.
- Write down the conversation as soon as possible, using the child's own words wherever you can. Include the date, time and details of anyone else who was present. Sign and date your record, then pass it promptly to the DSL or DDSL. They will make any necessary referrals to Children's Social Care in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.



Safeguarding and Child Protection

It is important that we safeguard ourselves as well as the children so please follow these guidelines:

- Children are often naturally affectionate but we please ask you to exercise care when children want to give you a cuddle or sit on your lap. Giving your own child a kiss/hug, for example at the end of a session, is fine, unless he/she is engaged in an activity that cannot be interrupted.
- Do **not** isolate yourself in a room with only one child. Never close the door if you are in a room with a child on your own.
- Do **not** go into the toilet with a child – always ask a member of staff to help if a child has a problem.
- Do **not** help a child to change their clothes (i.e Outdoor Learning). Always ask a member of staff to help.

Remember, if you have a concern, discuss it with the designated person for child protection immediately.

Thank you for helping us to keep our children safe

**IF SOMETHING DOESN'T
FEEL RIGHT, SPEAK UP.
SHARING A CONCERN
HELPS US KEEP OUR
CHILDREN SAFE.**





County Guidance on Child Protection

Followed by the school

Fleet Infant School is fully committed to all measures to protect the children and young people in our school, to taking all reasonable measures within the school to prevent potential abusers from having any access to the school, and to co-operating fully with all other agencies who are part of the child protection process in Hampshire.

- All measures will be taken in accordance with Safer Recruitment guidelines to minimise the risk of inappropriate individuals gaining access to the school as employees or volunteers.
- All staff and volunteers in the school are expected to show commitment to the principles and good practice of child protection as set out in the school's Child Protection Policy and Safeguarding Policy (available to read on the school website) and in Local Authority guidance and procedures.
- The school will fully support staff and volunteers in this process in ensuring that full training, guidance and support is provided to enable everyone to operate safely and appropriately with children and young people.
- Any allegations about a member of staff or volunteer will be fully and properly investigated, in a fair and balanced way, to establish whether there are legitimate concerns of a child protection nature that need to be addressed. Staff and volunteers need to be aware that such investigations may well require the involvement of the Police and Social Protection
- All staff and volunteers are expected to act in such a way that they do not bring suspicion upon themselves of a child protection nature. Staff and volunteers will be given advice on avoiding placing themselves in a vulnerable position with pupils and will be expected to follow that advice.
- All concerns of a child protection nature will be fully recorded on personal files, with copies provided to the individual, and may well be included in any future references which we are requested to write for that individual.
- All staff and volunteers must ensure that they share any child protection concerns about other staff/volunteers in the school with the headteacher. Failure to disclose relevant child protection information may be deemed to be a disciplinary offence.
- It is recognised that staff and volunteers will sometimes make a mistake or error of judgement in the way they deal with pupils. They must ensure that they report urgently to their manager any actions or events that may lead to a complaint or concern of a child protection nature. Failure to report and discuss such situations promptly may raise suspicion about their motives.

Volunteers who have any queries about child protection issues or who require further guidance or support should approach the headteacher in their role as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

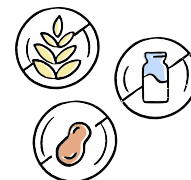
You are required to sign a **Child Protection Declaration** and a **Child Care Disqualification Declaration** as part of your induction. The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policies are published on the school website. You are asked to read the Child Protection Policy included in this induction pack.



Allergy Awareness and Anaphylaxis

Some children in our school have allergies, which can range from mild reactions to a potentially life-threatening reaction called anaphylaxis.

As a school, we have procedures in place to manage allergies, reduce risks and respond quickly in an emergency. As a Parent Helper, you have an important part to play by being allergy aware and following the guidance given by school staff.



Please:

- Always follow the school's allergy and food safety procedures.
- Check with a member of staff before offering any food to children.
- Do not give food or drink to a child unless this has been agreed with the member of staff leading the activity.
- Never assume that something is safe for a child because they have eaten it before.
- Tell a member of staff straight away if you think a child may have come into contact with something they are allergic to.
- If you notice a child becoming unwell after eating or coming into contact with something, seek help immediately.

Recognising Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can develop very quickly. Signs may include:

- difficulty breathing, wheezing or noisy breathing
- swelling of the lips, mouth, tongue or throat
- difficulty speaking or swallowing
- persistent coughing or choking
- a widespread rash or hives
- becoming pale, dizzy, confused or unusually sleepy
- vomiting or stomach pain
- becoming floppy or losing consciousness.

A child may not show all of these signs, and a rash may not always be present.

What should you do?

If you think a child is having a serious allergic reaction, get help immediately.

- Alert a member of staff and follow the school's emergency procedures. Do not leave the child alone or try to manage the situation yourself.
- If you are ever unsure, always seek help straight away rather than waiting to see if the child's symptoms get worse.
- As a Parent Helper, you are not expected to diagnose or manage a child's allergy. Your role is simply to be aware, follow the school's procedures and get help quickly if you have any concerns. Fleet Infant School's **Allergy Policy** is provided as part of this induction pack.



Fire Evacuation & other Emergencies



Fire Evacuation

If the fire alarm sounds, remain calm and follow the procedures set out in the school's Fire Policy. Your priority is to leave the building safely and follow the instructions of school staff.

As a Parent Helper, please make sure you are familiar with the following:

- Evacuation routes are displayed near each exit door. Use the nearest safe exit and follow staff instructions.
- The Fire Drill Assembly Point is Velmead Car Park. Please make your way there promptly and remain with the group until you are told it is safe to leave.
- Some children have a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) to support their safe evacuation. If you are working with a child who has a PEEP, a member of staff will explain any specific arrangements you need to be aware of.
- If you are supporting a group of children when the alarm sounds, stay with the group and follow the instructions of the class teacher or member of staff. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and never use a lift during an evacuation.
- Never re-enter the building, even if you are concerned that someone may still be inside. If someone is unaccounted for, report this to a member of staff at the assembly point. Do not put yourself or others at risk by attempting to go back inside.

The safe evacuation of everyone in the building is our priority. Please follow staff instructions and remain at the assembly point until you are given further guidance.



Lockdown

- When the bell rings 10x with the signal "Lockdown, Lockdown, Lockdown", follow the procedure set out in the **Lockdown Policy**.
- The school carries out regular practice Lockdown drills to ensure all staff and pupils know what to do in an emergency.



Medical Emergencies

- If a child becomes unwell or has a medical emergency, alert a member of staff immediately and follow their instructions.
- Parent Helpers should not attempt to manage a medical emergency themselves.
- Emergency medication, including inhalers and adrenaline auto-injectors (EpiPens), is kept in the Medical Room. Staff will manage the administration of medication in line with the child's individual healthcare plan and the school's procedures.



Things to Remember

Safeguarding & Volunteer Checks Paperwork

- We take our responsibility to safeguard and protect our children very seriously. Before you can volunteer in school, we ask all parent helpers to complete the necessary forms and paperwork so that we can carry out the appropriate safeguarding and vetting procedures.
- These checks **must be completed** before volunteering can begin.

Visitor Badge & Sign in

- All visitors to the school are required to wear a **red lanyard**.
- All visitors **MUST** sign **Sign In** on arrival in the morning and on exiting at the end of each day. If you leave the school site at lunchtime or for any other reason, you are required to sign out then re-sign in when you return to school.

Site Security

- For everyone's safety, Parent Helpers must not allow other visitors onto the school site when entering or leaving. Please do not hold the gate open for anyone else.
- All visitors must use the buzzer at the main entrance and sign in through the school office. Visitors who have signed in will be given a red lanyard badge.
- If you see an adult on site without a visitor lanyard, please inform the School Office immediately.

Use of Mobile Phones

- In accordance with our safeguarding procedures, personal mobile phones must be kept out of sight and stored securely while staff are working with children. They should only be used in designated staff areas during allocated break times.

Hot Drinks

- For the safety of our children, all hot drinks brought into school by Parent Helpers must be in a secure travel cup with a lid. Please keep hot drinks away from children and never leave them unattended in areas where children are present.

Allergy Aware School

- For the safety of all our children, Fleet Infant School does not allow nuts on site -This includes all types of nuts, as well as products containing nuts, such as praline, peanut butter, and nut-based snacks.
- Please ensure that any food you bring onto the school site, whether for your own consumption or for activities with pupils, does not contain nuts. This helps us protect children with severe allergies and ensures a safe environment for everyone.



School Policies

As a Parent Helper, there are some key policies and procedures that are important to your role. Please make sure you have read the following policies listed below. These policies can be viewed via our website [HERE](#).



KCSIE 2026

(Keeping Children Safe in Education)

Read the latest version [HERE](#)



Child Protection Policy



Allergy Policy

A full list of school policies can be viewed [HERE](#).

This [Parent Helper Handbook](#) provides a practical summary of the information most relevant to you. If you are ever unsure about a policy, procedure or situation, please ask a member of staff.



Parent Helpers

Volunteering in Our School

All volunteers will be required to obtain an enhanced DBS disclosure prior to helping in school. This process will include us requiring the following documents

- Support Staff Application Form ensuring a full employment history is detailed from end of education to present day, including any career breaks.
- Two referees, professional or character.
- Have brought in two forms of identification (Drivers Licence, Passport, Birth certificate).
- Have brought in proof of your address (Utility bill, Council Tax bill etc) from last 3 months.
- Have Attended a Parent Helpers Safeguarding Briefing with Mrs Chapman.
- Signed the Childcare Disqualification Declaration.
- Signed the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act Declaration.
- Signed the Fleet Infant School Child Protection Declaration.

Letting Us Know

If you are unable to attend your volunteering session, or are unwell, please let the School Office know as soon as possible so that we are aware and can make any necessary arrangements. Thank you.

