



Thames Ditton Infant School

Volunteers in School Policy

2023-2024

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Approved By: Safeguarding Committee

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1. Vision

Our vision is to inspire every child to grow and develop a love of learning, so they can confidently take their next steps. We believe that parental partnerships play a huge role in the delivery of that vision and we are extremely fortunate to have a parent community who are supportive and engaged, and who regularly give up their time to support children's learning in school.

2. Policy Aims

This policy aims to provide volunteers and staff with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for helping in school. Through its implementation we hope to encourage wider engagement, raise standards and promote community cohesion.

This policy is for parents or other adults volunteering in school and the staff they are supporting.

3. The role of volunteers

At Thames Ditton Infant School, volunteers support us in many different ways:

- Regularly helping individual children or groups of children in the classroom/as part of their regular school day
- Helping with classroom organisation/admin tasks
- Supporting children at one-off events in school
- Helping supervise children on school trips
- Helping supervise Year 2 children attending swimming lessons
- Helping the Friends of TDIS to plan, organise or run events

4. Expectations on volunteers

Volunteers will never be asked to:

- Take overall responsibility for all or some of the class (unless agreed in advance and having been DBS checked as part of a Friends of TDIS event)
- Take children off the school site without a teacher in charge
- Take responsibility for the health and welfare of students

5. Our commitment to our volunteers

As a school we value your time and support and we commit to:

- Explaining your tasks/jobs carefully so that you are clear about what we would like you to do
- Making it clear, in advance, whether you will be supporting your own child/your own child's class, or whether you will be working with different children/classes
- Making you feel welcome and comfortable – by planning how you will help in advance, ensuring that you know how to access toilets, making it clear who to ask if you have questions or concerns and by thanking you for your help
- Sharing relevant information about the children you are working with
- Treating anything you tell us with confidentiality
- Where relevant (for example when helping at one-off events and/or school trips), providing full briefing and risk assessment information in advance
- Treating you with the highest respect and care

We agree not to ask you to:

- Deal with difficult or challenge behaviour
- Carry out a task that you feel uncomfortable with

6. Maximising the impact of our volunteers' time

We recognise that all our volunteers have different skill sets, strengths and interests and where possible we are committed to maximising the impact of these. This will not only be of greater benefit to the children, but provide a more fulfilling experience for our volunteers too. Therefore, where volunteers offer to help out in the classroom/as part of the regular school day and/or with classroom organisation and admin tasks we will do our best to work with them to plan their involvement in such a way as to maximise the benefits for all involved. For example, some volunteers may be keen to support art or outdoor activities, while others are more comfortable helping us effectively display art work or looking after our school pets. At times, we may ask volunteers to take home resources for general class use, however we will not ask them to take home pupils' personalised work.

7. Finding out about volunteering opportunities

If you would like to volunteer regularly in school (weekly or fortnightly) then please contact the school office or class rep and let them know. If there is anything you are specifically interested in supporting or not supporting, it's helpful to let us know straight away. For example, if you would prefer not to help the children directly but to support with admin or organisational tasks, or if you are particularly passionate about art, sport or creative writing etc... This will help us to identify an appropriate role where possible.

Other volunteering opportunities (such as helping on a school trip, or as part of a one-off event) will be advertised in year group newsletters, the school bulletin or shared by your class rep. When these opportunities are communicated, we will make it clear: what the role will involve, how to sign up, who to contact if you have questions.

8. What we ask parent volunteers to agree to

- Inform a member of staff if you observe anything that concerns you
- Adhere to our safeguarding policy at all times
- To familiarise themselves with the school values
- Treat any information with total confidentiality
- Inform the school if you are unable to attend a volunteering commitment by emailing or phoning the school office (or contacting the Friends of TDIS as appropriate)
- Respect and listen to the guidance of staff at all times
- Not to bring additional children (e.g., siblings) unless agreed on a case-by-case basis

9. Safeguarding and security

- Volunteers who help out in school regularly will require an enhanced DBS check with the school. This will be arranged via the school office.
- Ahead of your school visit, you will be sent a link to Safeguarding training and advice.
- You will be asked to read and agree to adhere to the school's Safeguarding Policy (on website)
- On arrival at the school please sign in at reception and wear a visitor badge for the duration of your visit
- Please do not use your mobile phone while volunteering