**Saint Mary’s Primary School**

**Greenlough**

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**Volunteer Policy**

**September 2022**

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| **DATE**  |  |
| **Chair of Board of Governors** |  |
| **Principal** |  |
| **Date of Review** | **September 2025** |

Policy for Volunteers

In St. Mary’s, we use DENI’s definition that “a volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory completion of the procedures set out below, either (i) assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or (ii) is engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; summer activity schemes or residential activities; or to undertake coaching in sports activities.”

Introduction

There are many opportunities for people to become involved with school and individuals may wish to be generally available, or to offer their assistance with a particular age group or task.

All volunteers follow the same procedures and a list is held in school of those people who:

* have applied to be volunteers;
* who have completed the necessary paperwork (see appendices);
* who have been vetted by DENI, EA NE Region and AccessNI criminal records procedures.
* people are encouraged to volunteer at any time and application forms are readily available from the office, through any member of staff.
* An appeal for volunteers is made annually to allow time for clearance by Education Authority.

Code of Conduct

Whilst helping in school, volunteers are entitled to be treated with the respect and in a manner appropriate to a member of staff. If other parents have concerns/complaints, they should approach the principal in line with proper procedures and not the volunteer directly.

As semi-professionals, volunteers at St. Mary’s are expected to:

* demonstrate their support for education and give their full attention to the task in hand:

*For this reason, volunteers should not bring children with them to school unless as part of the group with which they are working. Parents who volunteer outside school hours may at times find it necessary to bring siblings to school. At these times, those children must be under the parents’ direct supervision. The parents are responsible for their own children’s safety and must keep the children with them at all times.*

* treat what they see and hear in school as confidential;

*Working with other people’s children is a privilege with responsibilities. Children observed in the classroom or the school should not be discussed outside, even with that child’s parents. Questions relating to individual children should be addressed to the child’s teacher or the principal.*

* not normally have access to children’s records. An exception might be relevant medical information.
* arrive on time and be ready to start the agreed task;
* leave all matters of discipline to the teacher with responsibility.

*Volunteers may address behaviour or safety issues if the teacher is temporarily*

 *unavailable. The volunteer should inform the teacher as soon as possible, who will take*

 *over.*

* accept direction and supervision;

Volunteers are not intended to take the place of staff but to provide assistance and enrichment. They should be consistent with the teacher in supporting the school’s ethos and expectations of behaviour. Volunteers should, therefore, agree to operate under the direction of St. Mary’s Primary staff.

* clearly communicate interests and expectations; and,
* present as a positive role model.

Volunteers should be:

* patient, flexible, appreciative, respectful, and considerate, particularly in their dealings with children;
* adhere to the school’s health and safety policy;
* adhere to the school’s pastoral care and child protection policies;
* dress in a manner that is appropriate for professional working in a primary school;
* refrain from inappropriate language or topics of conversation;
* adhere to the school’s ‘no smoking’ on site; and
* silence mobile phones inside the school building
* adhere to the “E-safety” and “Acceptable use of the internet policies”
* Follow the roles assigned to them on the education trip.

At all other times when the volunteer is at the school in their role as a parent, they should adhere to the guidance for other parents.

Volunteers’ Rights

Volunteers have the right to:

* be recognised for their valuable contributions to the educational experience of our children;
* be assigned worthwhile tasks;
* access any school policies and procedures that are relevant to their roles;
* receive any training or supervision that is necessary for the success of their activities; and
* receive support and be assured that any complaint against them will be dealt with through the school’s formal general complaints procedure.