"Developing potential without limitations"

Frieth C.E.C. School
Volunteers in Schools Policy

Date implemented : Amended June 2014
Member of staff responsible: Headteacher
Governing body committee responsible: Curriculum and Policy Committee

Headteacher's signature ……

Chair of Governor's signature ……

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Volunteers are an essential and invaluable part of school life and the teachers and staff at Frieth C.E.C. School are very grateful for the support and involvement of helpers. During a visit to the School each volunteer is linked with a specific member of staff to whom he or she will be directly responsible. Whilst there should be no significant addition to the workload of the staff member taking responsibility for the volunteer, it is expected that time is taken to ensure the volunteer is adequately inducted into the role and that there is mutual agreement and understanding.

1). Deployment

a) Volunteers should not be used to carry out duties which:
   (i) fall normally within the job description of a teacher or member of support staff, i.e. they must not be used to cover the absence of staff from school
   (ii) require them to have unsupervised access to children unless they have been appropriately checked (DBS).

b) Work experience students will be allocated a mentor or key contact for support in the school.

c) A Volunteers' Coordinator/Manager will be appointed to oversee the management and supervision of volunteers in school and to promote and ensure best practice in volunteering.

d) It is not compulsory for members of staff to accept responsibility for volunteers and additional responsibilities of this nature can only be designated with agreement of the employee concerned. The school recognises the value of appropriate and effective volunteer management and ensures that the member of staff with responsibility for volunteer involvement have this in their job description and receive appropriate training and support.

e) Volunteers can expect many of the same entitlements as employees, including clarity about their roles and responsibilities, induction, managerial supervision, support, relevant training and development opportunities, and the right to join an appropriate trade union.

f) Volunteers are also subject to the same obligations to abide by, and be subject to, the school's agreements, policies and procedures (e.g. health and safety, confidentiality, equal opportunities, behaviour, etc). They should be familiar with procedures designed to avoid hazards and risks associated with the tasks that they are being asked to carry out and, in particular, details of first aid and emergency arrangements.

g) As part of their induction to life at the school, volunteers will have access to basic information in the form of a handbook and additional information as appropriate, (e.g. plan of campus, fire regulations, security regulations, details of facilities available to them – staffroom, toilets etc).

h) The relationship between all paid workers and volunteers should be complementary and mutually beneficial. Paid workers should be fully aware of the work undertaken by volunteers and of the responsibility to both themselves and to the volunteers working in the school.

i) Volunteers should be able to receive a reference on the basis of their voluntary contribution to the life of the school.

j) Where a volunteer's particular skills or knowledge do not match the needs of the school, the offer of help may be declined.

2). Child Protection

a) It is ultimately the head teacher's responsibility to ensure that legally required checks are carried out on anyone in the school with responsibilities that can give them unsupervised access to pupils under the age of 19. This includes volunteers who regularly help:
   i. in the classroom
   ii. in extra-curricular activities
   iii. supervise pupils on school organised holiday.

b) All volunteers must adhere to the volunteers handbook for safeguarding procedures when working in school.

c) Schools planning to work with volunteers in any of the above categories should conduct an (enhanced) Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS), refer to the DfES List 99 and the local authority's own discreditor records before accepting the volunteer.

d) Head teachers should take all reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the person volunteering. It is recommended that the head teacher view, and take a copy of, at least two original documents:
   Birth certificate (plus marriage certificate if name changed by marriage)
   Passport
   Driver's licence.

e) These regulations do not necessarily apply to volunteers such as those who help organise and run fetes or who may assist the school activities on an irregular or ad hoc basis but if the head teacher is unclear about the position in respect of

a volunteer, further advice should be sought from the local authority. All PTA members who work directly with children must complete a DBS check.

3). Insurance

a) Volunteers must be informed about the extent of the insurance cover available. Whilst volunteering in the school they should be adequately protected against any risks that may arise from undertaking their voluntary activity. School public liability insurance must cover volunteers and they must be made aware of the position regarding any liability and limitations of this insurance. (Information available on the Bucks CC Schools web under Insurance)

b) Volunteers using their own vehicles to transport children other than their own children to and from school events (sports, music, etc) should be made aware of the school policy and advised to check with their personal car insurance company to ensure that they do not contravene their insurance policy conditions. Correct equipment for the safe passage of all passengers is the responsibility of the driver.

4). Finance

a) Where appropriate, volunteers will be signposted to, or offered opportunities for, relevant training to develop skills and knowledge which may or may not be accredited. Where appropriate, the cost of providing training will be met by the school as part of the budget.

b) Volunteering is freely undertaken and not for financial gain. By prior arrangement only the school will, as a matter of principle, meet out-of-pocket expenses of volunteers. All volunteers are entitled to prompt reimbursement of expenses that are incurred solely as the result of their volunteering.

c) Guidance from the Employment Service states that benefits such as Job Seekers Allowance, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance are not usually affected by volunteer activities as long as recipients do not receive any pay other than for expenses like fares or special clothing needed for volunteering. No payments may therefore be made to volunteers other than 'out-of-pocket' expenses. The main points for consideration are that volunteers should remain available for work if claiming unemployment benefits and that disabled volunteers should not undertake

voluntary work of a nature similar to that for which they are receiving disability benefit.

5. Adding Value

a) The school maintains a register of volunteers for the following purposes:
   i. for security records purposes
   ii. to contact volunteers (e.g. for help)
   iii. to record the names of volunteers for review and consultation (e.g. training needs)
   iv. for inviting volunteers to celebratory events (e.g. 'Thank you assemblies')
   v. to demonstrate (e.g. to OfSTED) the value added to the school community by volunteers

b) The school will consider providing a reference as a result of volunteering activity.

c) The school recognises the value that volunteering has for volunteers in terms of developing new skills and expertise as a result of their volunteering and will do its best to support the needs of the volunteer in this respect.