

# Balcombe C.E. Primary School



## VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

At Balcombe School, we could not provide the opportunities for children that we do without the huge support of our parents and carers. Volunteers help by: supporting in classrooms with reading, group work and giving presentations; accompanying visits; transporting children to sport fixtures and competitions and pathfinders. All offers of help are gratefully received whether regular or occasional.

At Balcombe School we are committed to Safeguarding and meeting the needs of all children. Please be aware that **mobiles phones must not be used on site**. This includes taking photographs and using social media. Smoking and /or vaping on the school premises are strictly prohibited. This leaflet has been given to you to make sure you understand what is expected of you when you volunteer in school. Please keep this leaflet in a safe place, so that you can read it again if you need to. Please feel free to ask if you are not clear about anything.

### Child Protection Advice for Volunteers

All those who come into contact with children through their everyday work, whether paid or voluntary, have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. In addition to this leaflet, you are required to read through our school child protection policy. This can be found on the school website.

### How important is confidentiality?

As a volunteer you will be privy to a range of information about the children in the class. Please observe our strict rules of confidentiality. If you have any concerns, or are asked

questions by other parents, these should be directed back to the class teacher.

Please be aware that your time within the classroom is not an opportunity to monitor the progress of your child in the class or evaluate teaching and learning. Occasionally, if it is in your child's best interest, we may ask you to help in another class.

### **What is a DBS Check?**

All adults, including volunteers working with children, are checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). This is to ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. Lara Power, our Business Manager, will be able to advise you further on this and tell you more about the process involved.

Whilst you are waiting for your checks to be completed it is very important that you are not left to work with children or young people without the supervision of a member of the school staff. It is important you inform us immediately if you become subject to any criminal investigation, caution or conviction. This helps to protect you as well as the children in your care.

### **Child Protection issues you may encounter**

You may become aware whilst working with a child that there are some difficult circumstances at home or elsewhere that give you cause for concern. You may become aware of unexplained marks or bruising, or changes in the child's behaviour or demeanour.

### **What should I do if I am worried?**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) for Child Protection in our school is **Mrs Millbanks (Headteacher)** and our Deputy DSL is **Miss Bendall**. If you have **any** concerns please report these to the class teacher in the first instance and they will deal with the matter in an appropriate way.

### **What should I do if a child discloses that s/he is being harmed?**

Although the likelihood of this is small, it is important to know what to do in such an eventuality. If a child begins to tell you something of concern;

- Listen to the child, without making judgements,
- Take what they tell you seriously, children rarely lie about such matters,
- Explain that you cannot keep the information secret and must pass it on to someone who will know what to do,
- Do not interrogate the child and ask leading questions, such as "what did they do next?",
- Try and convey to the child that they are not to blame for what has happened, though at the same time avoid criticising the abuser,

- Do not make promises that you can't keep but tell the child what you are going to do.

## **What should I do next?**

It is important to pass on as much information as possible to the DSL. Make a written record and inform the DSL as soon as possible.

## **What should I do if the alleged abuser is a member of school staff?**

You should report such allegations to the Headteacher. If the allegation is about the Headteacher, you must contact the Chair of Governors. Details are available from the school office.

## **How do I ensure that my behaviour is always appropriate?**

Appropriate relationships with children should be based on mutual trust and respect. As a volunteer you may well be working closely with children, sometimes on a one to one basis. Children, especially when they are young, are often spontaneously affectionate and tactile. It is important not to alienate them through lack of response or by appearing to reject this. You should, however, be careful about physical contact with pupils.

If you are working with a pupil on his/her own always ensure that the door is left open or that you can be visible to others. Never make arrangement to meet a pupil on their own without school and parental permission.

**Do not photograph pupils, exchange emails or text messages, or give out your own personal details.**

## **Helping on Visits**

If you are helping on a school visit please advise the office if you have any medical conditions we should be aware of. A thorough risk assessment will have been completed prior to any visit and when appropriate, this will be shared with you, alongside an outline of the day and contact details for key staff. Any personal contact numbers of staff must only be used during the visit and not at any other time, and any information given out to support a school visit, must be handed back to the visit leader at the end of the day. Personal mobile phones must be kept out of sight and used prudently.

The school's 'Behaviour for Learning Policy' detailing expected behaviour and sanctions applies at all times, and a copy of this is available on the school website.

Any first aid incidents must be dealt with by a trained first aider. A copy of our First Aid procedures can also be found on the website.

**Please remember that smoking, taking photographs or using any forms of social media is strictly forbidden at all times.**

Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
**Mrs Millbanks (Headteacher)**

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead:  
**Miss Bendall**

Designated Member of the Governing body for Safeguarding:  
**Ms Baird**

If you have any concerns please report these to the class teacher in the first instance and they will deal with the matter in an appropriate way.

Information on Pan Sussex Child Protection Procedures can be found on their website;  
**[www.westsussexscb.org.uk](http://www.westsussexscb.org.uk)**

The latest manual and procedures can be found at;  
**[sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk](http://sussexchildprotection.procedures.org.uk)**

West Sussex Children's Services: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

Telephone: 01403 229 900 / Out of Hours: 0330 222 6664

Email: [MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@westsussex.gcsx.gov.uk)