

MARISH

ACADEMY TRUST



Guidance for Parent Helpers and Volunteers 2023

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1. Introduction

At Marish Academy Trust, we welcome and encourage parent/carer volunteers and students involved in work placement training to come into school and work with us to support children's learning.

We have set out below our guidance for all volunteers in our schools, in line with recommendations from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

If government guidelines indicate that additional adults are not advised (e.g. during the COVID-19 pandemic) then all volunteering roles will be suspended until the guidelines change.

2. Purpose and Aims of Guidance

Volunteers play a vital role as partners in educating their own and other children and in simply being "another pair of hands". We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the Trust's work, and that they enrich the Trust through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

We are committed to using volunteers in a way that supports the Trust's strategic aims and vision, as well as its development plan.

The aim of the Marish Academy Trust volunteer policy is to:

- Encourage the wider community to engage with the school, thereby enhancing the curriculum, raising achievement and promoting community cohesion
- Ensure that volunteers support the school's vision and values, and adhere to our policies
- Provide staff, volunteers and parents with clear expectations and guidelines
- Set a clear, fair process for recruiting and managing volunteers

This policy has been developed in line with the Department for Education's statutory safeguarding guidance, [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#).

However, Marish Academy Trust has a duty of care to ensure safe volunteering practice and that all the necessary checks are carried out on all volunteers, before they begin any work in school.

All volunteers, who are not school students on work experience or college students on placements, undergo a Criminal Record Board check to confirm their suitability to work with children. This check (DBS) has to be completed before a volunteer can start.

All volunteers are assigned a designated teacher or other member of staff, who is responsible for them adhering to this policy and practice during the time they are in school.

All volunteers are invited to an induction meeting and are given training in their duties by their designated member of staff, or another team member.

No volunteer is authorised to work alone with one child or to work unsupervised in Marish Academy Trust schools.

3. General Guidance

All volunteers must follow the following guidelines:

- Enter via main office entrance, report to the receptionist, sign in the visitor's book and wear an identification or visitor's badge.
- Report to their designated teacher or member of staff in charge of the class/event
- Direct any questions or concerns to your designated teacher or member of staff.
- Must never supervise children in 1:1 situations.
- Must not carry out any personal care for students including toileting or helping or supervising dressing.
- Be aware of safe touch protocols and not initiate physical contact with a child, beyond that necessary for safeguarding purposes. If a young child hugs or kisses you, respond by saying thank you and distracting them with another activity.
- Be aware that parents and carers will perceive you as a member of staff, so please follow the code of conduct outlined the staff handbook, (including the dress code) which will be shared with you at induction.
- Ensure you know who to report injuries and general concerns to and understand what to do in the event of a fire alarm or other evacuation procedure.
- Ensure you report anything worrying straight away to the teacher in charge. This is for your own protection, and would include such things as a child touching you inappropriately or saying something perturbing to you, or just a funny feeling you might have that something is wrong.
- Ask a member of staff if you have any concerns.
- Complete and sign a declaration stating that as a volunteer you will NOT have unsupervised contact with children and that you abide by this guidance.

4. Further Guidance

The information below is designed to provide some helpful guidance during your time in school:

4.1. Following the Trust's Diamond Rules

Marish Primary School is a three to four form entry with almost 800 children on roll from 2 to 11 years old. Willow Primary school is a 2 to three form entry with almost 500 children on roll from 3-11 years old.

Our aim is to educate the whole child and support and nurture their development. Our three school rules, which we expect everyone to adhere to, are:

Show good manners and respect at all times.

Care for everyone and everything.

Follow instructions straightaway, with thought and care.

These diamond rules are the core foundation for our ethos and vision at Marish Academy Trust. Please treat the children with kindness and respect. They enjoy and benefit from the attention of visiting "grown-ups". It is important to remember that young children are very impressionable. The way adults in the school behave and speak provides an example to the children. We are role models for the children.

If a child or group of children are misbehaving, be firm with them and tell the class teacher, but never shout or give out punishments. In each class there is a behaviour system which the children and staff follow and which is explained in the staff handbook.

When the children are in school please refer to the teacher and other staff using their title and surname, e.g. Mr Robinson.

Do talk to the children about the activity they are involved in, help with the spellings, read with them and listen to them read to you, share a game and listen to them talk, ask questions. They appreciate your attention and time. If involved in lessons, you may want to discuss what they have learnt or what else they may know.

The staff handbook, which will be given to you at your induction meeting, will provide a wealth of further information but a few essentials are listed below for your reference:

4.2. Lunch Time

Food may be bought from the canteen or you can bring own lunch from home. Please feel free to use the staff room but please observe professional confidentiality and not repeat anything you may overhear whilst in there.

4.3. Toilet Facilities

There are both male, female and disabled access toilets located in all areas of the schools. Please ask a member of staff to direct you to these.

4.4. Coats & Valuables

Valuables should be kept near you in a cupboard in the classroom. Personal property and valuables are brought onto the school at your own risk. Marish Academy Trust cannot be held responsible for any loss of or damage to your property.

4.5. Mobile Phones

The use of mobile phones is not permitted in school except in areas where children are not permitted, during breaks. Please ensure your phone is either switched off or put onto silent so it does not disturb your work. Please ensure you read the Trust mobile phone policy which you will be given at your induction meeting.

4.6. Absence

If you are unable to come to school for any reason, please telephone the school office as soon as possible, so we can let the teacher know you will be absent.

Marish Primary - 01753 819900

Willow Primary - 01753 551854

4.7. Confidentiality

Please remember that information you may hear in school is confidential so do not discuss school matters outside school.

If you are ever approached by another parent who knows you volunteer in school, and they ask you about their own child or an incident that occurred in school, always refer that parent to the class teacher.

It is very important that anything a child tells you about themselves, their family or any incidents from home, is reported on to the class teacher and is treated as confidential. **It must not be discussed with anyone but the class teacher.**

4.8. Dress Code

Our schools serve a diverse community of children and families from many different ethnicities, faiths and cultures. We wish to present a professional image to parents, pupils and visitors at all times and we are aware that first impressions are important. Working with very young children and ensuring that they experience an active curriculum means that our clothing also has to be practical. Please refer to the staff handbook for specific details.

We hope this information is useful to you and that you enjoy your time with us. The children gain so much from the opportunity of meeting a variety of different people and the staff value the support you are able to give them.

5. Additional Information for College Students

5.1. Your time

If you need to carry out a planned activity or a specific observation, speak to the teacher you are working with to discuss opportunities and time. To ensure that teachers can plan their classrooms effectively, they will need to know your plans a week ahead.

5.2. Story Time

If part of your training course needs you to read to a group of children, initially we will select small groups of children for you. As your confidence grows we will increase the numbers of children until you are ready to take a whole group. Please remember the best stories are ones you have prepared, and do tell us how you feel your story sessions are going. There are many story sacks in school to support children with EAL.

5.3. Outside Play

In the foundation stage (Nursery and Reception classes) outside play is valued equally to indoor play and teachers plan their equipment and activities with care. Please make sure you spend some time in the outdoor learning environment each week to develop your knowledge.

5.4. Coursework Evidence, Reports and Forms

All teachers in the schools can sign any forms you may have but please remember they are all very busy people and you will need to make sure you have prepared the areas you feel you are ready to have signed. We are all here to ensure you gain the most from your time with us but you may need to give up some of your own time if you want someone to sit down with you to discuss your progress.

6. Volunteers' Confirmation Form

Please complete and sign the slip below for our records. Thank you for your support.

THIS IS TO CONFIRM THAT I HAVE READ, UNDERSTAND AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY THE ATTACHED GUIDELINES ISSUED TO SCHOOLS ON THE USE OF VOLUNTEERS.

- Please tick when you have read and signed the ICT agreement, mobile phone policy and staff handbook.

Signed: _____

Please Print Name: _____

School: Marish Primary/ Willow Primary (please circle)

Date _____

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