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Mulberry Park Educate Together Safer Working Practices for Volunteers Policy

These guidelines are taken from the **REVISED Guidance for Safer Working Practice for Adults who work with Children and Young People in Education 2015**

They apply to all adults volunteering in the school whatever their position, role, or responsibilities, or volunteering to help at school events outside the school or outside the school day.

Unsuitability

Volunteers should:

- have a clear understanding about the nature and content of this document
- discuss any uncertainties or confusion with Head
- understand what behaviours may call into question their suitability to continue to volunteer with children

Duty of Care

Volunteers should:

- understand their responsibilities of their role and be aware that sanctions will be applied if these provisions are breached
- always act, and be seen to act, in the child's best interests
- avoid any conduct which would lead any reasonable person to question their motivation and intentions
- take responsibility for their own actions and behaviour

Confidentiality

Volunteers should:

- be clear about when information can be shared and in what circumstances it is appropriate to do so
- are expected to treat information they receive about children in a discreet and confidential manner
- should seek advice from a member of staff if they are in any doubt about sharing information they hold or which has been requested of them
- report any concerns or allegations to the Head

Making a Professional Judgement

Where no specific guidance exists volunteers should:

- discuss the circumstances that informed their action, or their proposed action, with the Head
- report any actions which could be mis-interpreted to the Head
- always discuss any misunderstanding, accidents or threats with the Head
- always record discussions and reasons why actions were taken.
- record any areas of disagreement about course of action taken and if necessary referred to a higher authority

Positions of Power and Trust

Volunteers should not:

- use their position to gain access to information for their own or others' advantage
- use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- use their status and standing to form or promote relationships which are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

Propriety and Behaviour

Volunteers should not:

- behave in a manner which would lead any reasonable person to question their suitability to help with children or act as a role model.
- make, or encourage others to make, unprofessional personal comments which scapegoat, demean or humiliate, or which might be interpreted as such
- be aware that behaviour in their personal lives may impact upon their role with children
- follow any codes of conduct deemed appropriate by the school
- understand that the behaviour and actions of their partner (or other family members) may raise questions about their suitability to help with children and young people

Dress and Appearance

Volunteers should wear clothing which:

- is appropriate to their role
- is not likely to be viewed as offensive, revealing, or sexually provocative
- does not distract, cause embarrassment or give rise to misunderstanding
- is absent of any political or otherwise contentious slogans
- is not considered to be discriminatory and is culturally sensitive

Personal Living Space

Volunteers should:

- be vigilant in maintaining their privacy and be mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- challenge any request for their accommodation to be used as an additional resource for the organisation
- be mindful of the need to maintain professional boundaries
- refrain from asking children to undertake personal jobs or errands

Gifts, Rewards and Favouritism

Volunteers should:

- be aware of the school's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- ensure that gifts received or given in situations which may be misconstrued are declared
- only give gifts to an individual young person as part of an agreed reward system and cleared with staff
- ensure that all selection processes which concern children are fair and that wherever practicable these are undertaken and agreed by more than one member of staff

Infatuations

Volunteers should:

- report and record any incidents or indications (verbal, written or physical) that suggest a child may have developed an infatuation with an adult in the workplace
- always acknowledge and maintain professional boundaries

Communication with Children

Volunteers should:

- not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile telephone number and details of any blogs or personal websites
- only make contact with children for professional reasons and through a member of staff
- recognise that text messaging is rarely an appropriate response to a child in a crisis situation or at risk of harm.
- not use internet or web-based communication channels to send personal messages to a child

- ensure that if a social networking site is used, details are not shared with children and young people and privacy settings are set at maximum

Social contact

Volunteers should:

- have no secret social contact with children and young people or their parents
- consider the appropriateness of the social contact according to their role and nature of their work
- never have any planned social contact with children without the parents permission
- advise senior management of any social contact they have with a child or a parent with who whom they work, which may give rise to concern
- report and record any situation, which may place a child at risk or which may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing
- be aware that the sending of personal communications such as birthday or faith cards should always be recorded and/or discussed with a member of staff.
- understand that some communications may be called into question and need to be justified.

Sexual contact

Volunteers should not:

- have sexual relationships with children
- have any form of communication with a child which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative i.e. verbal comments, letters, notes, electronic mail, phone calls, texts, physical contact
- make sexual remarks to, or about, a child
- discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children

Volunteers should:

- ensure that their relationships with children clearly take place within the boundaries of a respectful, professional relationship
- take care that their language or conduct does not give rise to comment or speculation. Attitudes, demeanour and language all require care and thought.

Physical contact

Volunteers should:

- be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent

- always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact be open to scrutiny
- not indulge in 'horseplay'
- always encourage children, where possible, to undertake self-care tasks independently
- work within Health and Safety regulations
- be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and always be sensitive to issues of gender
- understand that physical contact in some circumstances can be easily misinterpreted

Other activities that require physical contact

Volunteers should:

- treat children with dignity and respect and avoid contact with intimate parts of the body
- always explain to a child the reason why contact is necessary and what form that contact will take
- seek consent of parents/staff where a child or young person is unable to do so because of a disability.
- consider alternatives, where it is anticipated that a child might misinterpret any such contact,
- be familiar with and follow recommended guidance and protocols
- conduct activities where they can be seen by others
- be aware of gender, cultural or religious issues that may need to be considered prior to initiating physical contact.

Behaviour management

Volunteers should:

- seek advice from staff if sanctions are deemed necessary
- not use force as a form of punishment
- try to defuse situations before they escalate
- inform staff of any behaviour management techniques used, after clearing with staff first
- adhere to the organisation's behaviour management policy
- be mindful of factors which may impact upon a child's behaviour e.g. bullying, abuse and where necessary take appropriate action

Use of control and physical intervention

Volunteers should:

- adhere to the organisation's physical intervention policy – no physical intervention except in an emergency to prevent harm to a child
- always seek to defuse situations
- always use minimum force for the shortest period necessary
- record and report as soon as possible after the event any incident where physical intervention has been used.

Children in distress

Volunteers should:

- consider the way in which they offer comfort and reassurance to a distressed child and do it in an age-appropriate way
- be circumspect in offering reassurance in one to one situations, but always record such actions in these circumstances
- follow professional guidance or code of practice where available
- never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- record and report situations which may give rise to concern from either party
- not assume that all children seek physical comfort if they are distressed

Intimate care

Volunteers should:

- not undertake any intimate care of a child

Personal Care

Volunteers should:

- avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress
- avoid any visually intrusive behaviour
- where there are changing rooms announce their intention of entering
- not change in the same place as children
- not shower or bathe with children
- not assist with any personal care task which a child or young person can undertake by themselves

First Aid and administration of medication

Volunteers should:

- not administer any first aid or medication to a child if a member of staff is present
- if no staff member is present make other adults aware of the task being undertaken
- explain to the child what is happening.
- always act and be seen to act in the child's best interests
- report and record any administration of first aid or medication
- have regard to any health plan which is in place
- always ensure that an appropriate health/risk assessment is undertaken prior to undertaking certain activities

One to one situations

Volunteers should:

- not enter into a one to one situation with a child
- always report any situation where a child becomes distressed or angry to a senior colleague

Home visits

Volunteers should

- not undertake home visits to children

Transporting children

Volunteers should:

- ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine which is likely to impair judgement and/ or ability to drive
- be aware that the safety and welfare of the child is their responsibility until they are safely passed over to a parent/carer
- record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- ensure that their behaviour is appropriate at all times
- ensure that there are proper arrangements in place to ensure vehicle, passenger and driver safety including child seats. This includes having proper and appropriate insurance for the type of vehicle being driven
- ensure that any impromptu or emergency arrangements of lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned

Trips and Outings

Volunteers should:

- always have another adult present in out of school activities
- ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times
- on a residential never share beds with a child/children.
- not share bedrooms unless it involves a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been previously discussed with the Head

Photography and videos

Volunteers should:

- only take photos with the permission of a senior staff member
- be clear about the purpose of the activity and about what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- be able to justify images of children in their possession
- avoid making images in one to one situations or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- ensure the child/young person understands why the images are being taken and has agreed to the activity and that they are appropriately dressed.
- only use equipment provided or authorised by the organisation
- report any concerns about any inappropriate or intrusive photographs found
- always ensure they have checked if the school has parental permission to take and/or display photographs

Volunteers should not:

- display or distribute images of children unless they have consent to do so from the Head
- use images which may cause distress
- use mobile telephones to take images of children
- take images 'in secret' or taking images in situations that may be construed as being secretive.

Internet usage

Volunteers should:

- follow the school's guidance on the use of IT equipment
- ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material on the internet
- ensure that any films or material shown to children and young people are age appropriate ie U rated films. PG rated films may only be shown with the headteacher's permission as parental permission is required
- only use websites approved in advance by the staff

Whistleblowing

Volunteers should:

- report any behaviour by colleagues that raises concern regardless of source to the Head

Sharing concerns and reporting Incidents

Volunteers should:

- report concerns to the headteacher
- if the concerns are about the headteacher report them to the Academy Council chair
- should take responsibility for recording any incident, and passing on that information where they have concerns about any matter pertaining to the welfare of an individual in the school