**Stoke Hill Federation Volunteering Procedures**

**January 2017**

The aim of this document is to:

* To provide parents/staff and volunteers with clear expectations, induction and guidelines for working in school.
* To encourage the wider community to engage with children’s learning to raise standards of achievement and promote community cohesion.
* To ensure the highest standards of safeguarding for our pupils by a shared knowledge of procedures.

*Volunteers are parents or other adults working alongside the school staff and students on work experience (although the latter may have a DBS provided by the University or be under 16 and therefore not eligible to have one).*

Thank you for offering to volunteer at Stoke Hill Federation. We try to offer a wide range of exciting learning opportunities for the children both inside and outside of the classroom and many of these require the support of additional adults. The staff and the children really appreciate your precious gift of time and interest and we hope that you will find it rewarding and good fun too!

There are many regulations that govern what is and is not permitted in schools to protect the children, the staff and all visitors/volunteers. This handbook is designed to provide you with clear guidelines to follow. In addition it should also provide you with general information about routines and procedures.

**Volunteer Application Process**

All volunteers are required to complete a Federation application form and a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) on-line form before volunteering can commence. The procedure is as follows:

1. Attend Volunteer Training, to find out a bit more about how volunteering works at the Stoke Hill Federation. There are two opportunities available at the beginning of each term. The dates are on the Annual Parent Calendar. There may be the possibility of individualised training at other times of the year.

If you are still interested in being a volunteer proceed to No 2.

1. Ask at the school office/at Volunteer training for a **FEDERATION** **VOLUNTEER APPLICATION** pack.
2. Bring the completed **application form** to the school office along with the required **DBS evidence** (details on the reverse of this sheet).
3. The admin team will then enter your details onto the DBS on-line site.
4. You will then be emailed by the DBS on-line checking system and provided with a personalised log-in so that you can complete your own on-line disclosure.
5. You will be notified by post of the outcome of the DBS disclosure and the school will be notified by email. In the event of an unsuccessful DBS disclosure you will be contacted by the Head/Deputy Headteacher.
6. The **Volunteer Protocol sheet** must be completed – this requires you to read the Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies, as well as **Keeping Children Safe in Education**; it also refers to the **Acceptable Use Agreement** and **Suitability Declaration**, which must be filled-in.
7. If you have a successful DBS disclosure and we have received two references, you can begin volunteering by discussing the available options with the office team at SHINS or Mrs McKimm at SHJS. If you wish to volunteer in the Nursery, you should speak directly to Gill Holmyard.
8. To keep your DBS from expiring, you need to not have a ‘break from service’ longer than 3 months. Please make sure you sign-in on each volunteering visit and, if you are not volunteering regularly, arrange a visit to avoid 3 month lapse. Every little helps, so even an hour of volunteering would do the job! If the admin team notice you are approaching 3 months without a visit, they may contact you to invite you to come in.

***The Headteacher has the authority to decline or withdraw the help of volunteers if he or she believes that it is not in the best interest of the children.***

***Those who help out at specific events e.g. school fair, relatives in school days etc, who do not have unsupervised access to children, do not need a DBS.***

**What do I need to be a volunteer?**

You do not need any special skills or qualifications to be a volunteer other than a genuine interest in young children, a flexible attitude, kindness and patience, a good sense of humour and a willingness on occasion to ‘get messy’!

**The role of the volunteer**

***Nursery*** – the Nursery teachers are very happy to welcome volunteers to participate in a range of learning opportunities.

***Foundation Stage*** – the Foundation Stage teachers are happy to welcome volunteers. However young children can find it very difficult to share a parent, especially when they are also adjusting to full time education. Therefore, volunteers can only begin working in the Foundation Stage classrooms from January onwards.

***Key Stage 1 (Year 1 and Year 2)*** – the Key Stage 1 teachers welcome volunteer help, especially with educational visits or to support practical learning tasks in school. Once the volunteer process is complete please contact the school office to find out more about the opportunities that are available.

***Key Stage 2 (Junior School)*** – the Junior School teacher’s welcome volunteer help with hearing children read, supporting practical learning tasks in school and with educational visits.

**Attendance**

All volunteers are expected to ‘sign in’ and ‘sign out’ for each visit, both at reception **and in the class volunteering log** and to wear a name/role badge.

It is most helpful if volunteers can arrive five/ten minutes before the session begins so that the teacher has time to explain the planned learning. Please be sure to let us know if for any reason you can’t.

If you are due to volunteer but are unable to attend for any reason, please call the school, (infants: 01392 258894/Junior: 01392 667830) ideally with 24 hours’ notice or alternatively before 9.00 on the day. Thank you.

**Working with Children**

Volunteers should always work in sight of a member of staff.

The teacher plans the learning and the volunteer might work alongside a few children or a small group. At the beginning of the session the learning intention and outcome will be explained to the children so that everyone in the room knows what is trying to be achieved.

Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the usual standards of behaviour expected. Each classroom has a display of agreed ‘class’ rules that complement the whole school rules. It is useful to look for these and familiarise yourself with them. We do have very high expectations of behaviour in order that the class/school environment is a happy place and everyone is able to get on with their learning. If you do have a concern, please talk to the class teacher.

**Safeguarding Children**

All those who come into contact with children and families have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Whilst most of our children come from happy homes and families, some do not. In fact, they could be experiencing a wide range of abuse whether neglect, physical, emotional or sexual.

***If you are worried that a child might be being abused or neglected you should***

1. Listen carefully and do not interrupt if a child chooses to tell you something about what is happening to them.
2. Remember that an allegation of child abuse or neglect may lead to a criminal investigation, so don’t do anything that may jeopardise a police investigation such as asking leading questions or attempting to investigate the allegations of abuse.
3. Where concerns arise as a result of information given by a child, it is important to reassure the child but not to promise confidentiality.
4. Record all information given to you in writing, as soon as possible. Write down where you were, what they said, what you said, and who you told. You may be asked to put this onto a child protection pink form.
5. Report the incident to the class teacher who will report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs Mackay or Mr Souter) or the Deputy (Mrs Kenney or Mrs McKimm/Mr Sullivan).

It is always a good thing that the child is telling someone; often, only when they tell us, can we do anything to help. A decision will then be made about whether further action is required. If you need more guidance on such matters, please do not hesitate to ask/refer to the Safeguarding policy and advice documents available in each school.

***Working safely with children***

Never put yourself in a position where there could be the possibility that you could be accused of inappropriate behaviour.

* Make sure there are other children or adults around the place you are working.
* Make sure doors are open and you can be easily seen by people walking past.
* Don’t instigate physical contact.
* Don’t pass on or accept details such as phone numbers or email addresses.
* If you have any concerns, however small, make sure you pass them on to the child’s teacher or to the Designated Safeguarding Officer.

***Safeguarding Contacts:***

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| **Infant School Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer:** | Mrs Sarah MackaySarah.mackay@stokehill.devon.sch.uk | 01392 258894 |
| **Junior School Senior Designated Safeguarding Officer:** | Mr Roy SouterRoy.souter@stokehill.devon.sch.uk | 01392 66783007854 142614 |
| **Infant School Deputy Safeguarding Officer:** | Mrs Alison KenneyAlison.kenney@stokehill.devon.sch.uk | 01392 258894 |
| **Junior School Deputy Safeguarding Officers:** | Mr Jamie Sullivan/Mrs Claire McKimmJamie.sullivan@stokehill.devon.sch.ukClaire.mckimm@stokehill.devon.sch.uk | 01392 667830 |

**Out of hours: *If you believe that urgent action is needed because, for example, a child is in immediate danger or needs accommodation, phone the MASH on 0345 155 1071 and give as much information as you can.***

***Physical Touch***

The expectation is that staff/volunteers will work in a ‘limited touch’ culture and, when physical contact is made with children, this will be in response to their needs at the time, will be of limited duration and will be appropriate given their age, stage of development and background.

There may be occasions when a distressed child may need comfort and reassurance that may include physical touch such as a caring parent may give.

***Nursery Policy*:**

There may be occasions where it is necessary for **staff** to restrain a child physically to prevent them from disrupting learning, inflicting damage on either themselves, others or property. In such cases only the minimum force necessary will be used for the minimum length of time required for the child to regain self-control.

**Equality**

You will be expected to advance the equality of opportunity for all children and adults in the school, by fostering good relations and by eliminating discrimination or harassment across all protected characteristics e.g. gender, race, disability, size, religion and sexual orientation.

**Health and Safety**

***Fire***

Procedures in the event of a fire are clearly posted in every room on or near the Fire Exit. You would be expected to accompany the class teacher and the children to the correct assembly point.

***Equipment***

You may be asked to use some of the many types of technology in the building e.g. photocopier. Please do not use anything without being trained first.

***First Aid***

Volunteers, who may be ‘First Aiders’ are not permitted to carry out First Aid on any occasion. If a child does need First Aid, please bring it to the attention of the teacher immediately.

***Changing Children***

Volunteers are not permitted to change a child in the event of wetting/soiling. They may assist children who are dressing/undressing for P.E., concerts and role play etc. where needed/appropriate.

**The safety of our children is paramount. The responsibility for H & S in the school lies with the Headteacher, Governors and H & S Coordinator. However, we are always grateful for comments from any visitors. If you do notice something of concern, please inform the school office, who will contact the person responsible.**

**Confidentiality**

***Children***

Generally, volunteers will not be privy to confidential information, but all information about a child’s well being, behaviour, health and academic progress is confidential. For that reason, we have to make clear to all our volunteers that anything you may learn about a child or their family must not be shared outside of the school. Sometimes volunteers, especially those that are parents themselves, get approached by other parents asking them about their child or a member of staff etc; please make clear to them that you are not at liberty to comment on anything that happens in school and direct them to the class teacher or the Headteacher/Deputy/Assistant Head.

***Staff***

Generally volunteers will not be privy to confidential information about staff, but all information about the staff, including well being, conduct and their role, is confidential.

**No information about children or staff gained through your work as a volunteer is to be shared on any form of social media e.g. Facebook. Indeed, we expect you to take every opportunity to uphold the good name of the school.**

**Career Opportunities**

Some people very sensibly use the volunteer route to explore the idea of a career working with children. Indeed, many of our current support staff were parent volunteers first! If you are interested in finding out more about a job in the school, or training/qualifications, then talk to Mrs Kenney or Mr Sullivan, who oversee staff training. The school offers a wide range for its staff throughout the year and you may be invited to attend. If you are interested in other school based training, please let us know.

**Photographs**

Photographs of the children are taken to record and display learning or for promotional purposes with parental consent. Parents are permitted to photograph or video their child in public events e.g. Family Assembly providing it is solely for family use. Therefore, regretfully, volunteers are not permitted to take photographs/video recordings of children.

**Mobile Phones**

Your mobile phone is **not** permitted to be about your person during teaching sessions. You may of course access it during break/lunchtimes.

**Smoking**

The whole site, both inside and outside, is a designated NO SMOKING!

**Information for Junior School Volunteers**

**Tea/Coffee/Lunch**

You are welcome to help yourself to tea and coffee and to use the staffroom during your time at school. Chilled, filtered water is available from the staffroom or the fountains outside the toilets.

**Dress Code**

Working with young children is a very practical job, but also one that is highly visible and for that reason the staff dress code is ‘smart/casual’. All staff are expected to dress appropriately for the activity e.g. P.E., art and outdoor learning.

**Time**

These are the options currently available to volunteers:

***Educational Visits*** (field trips) – these usually take a full school day, though may be shorter if more local. On occasion, an earlier start and later finish may be required, if the visit is further afield.

***Educational Visitors*** (in school) – this will typically be a ‘one off’ event lasting for a school morning 9-12.00 or a school afternoon 1.00-3.05, where an additional pair of hands is required to support practical learning tasks.

***In class support*** – it is possible to volunteer in a class or year group on a regular basis, or to support a particular topic or lesson.

**Information for Infant and Nursery School Volunteers**

**Tea/coffee/lunch**

You are welcome to help yourself to tea and coffee and to use the staffroom at coffee time, which is 10:30-10:45. Chilled, filtered water is available from the staff kitchen and water fountains outside the First Aid area or in the Year 2 cloakroom. Regretfully, the staffroom is not available to volunteers at lunchtime. Therefore, volunteers who have been asked to stay all day will need to leave the premises between 12:00 and 1:00. However, if you have a child at the school, you are welcome to join them at lunchtime in the dining hall, but not onto the playground.

**Health & Safety: no hot drinks are to be taken from the staff kitchen to other areas of the school unless in a safety mug.**

**Dress Code**

Working with young children is a very practical job, but also one that is highly visible and for that reason the staff dress code is ‘smart/casual’. Denim skirts/jeans, very thin ‘strappy’ tops, low necklines, exposed mid drifts and additional body piercings are not considered suitable. All staff are expected to dress appropriately for the activity e.g. art, outdorr learning and P.E.

**There are the options currently available to volunteers:**

***Educational Visits*** (field trips) – these usually take a full day (8:30-3:15). On occasion an earlier start and later finish may be required if the visit is further afield.

***Educational Visitors*** (in school) – this will typically be a ‘one off’ event lasting for a school morning (9-12) or a school afternoon (1-3:15), where an additional pair of hands is required to support practical learning tasks.

***In class support*** – this will be for a maximum of 2 hours per week, on the same day at the same time, for half a term.

**Volunteering on an Educational Visit**

**The School will:-**

* Allocate responsibility to each adult for named children and share an appropriate level of information about any special needs/requirements a child may have
* Ensure that each adult knows which children they are responsible for
* Ensure that each child knows which adult is responsible for them
* Ensure that all adults understand that they are responsible to the class teacher for the supervision of the children assigned
* Ensure that all adults and children are aware of the expected standards of behaviour
* Ask you whether you want to be with your own child or not if applicable
* Ask you what you would like to be called – Mr/Mrs/Miss/first name
* Ensure that children are easily identifiable (often by wearing their school uniform) if the visit is to be a populated area

**The Big Picture**

School will ensure that you know the purpose of the visit, provide a timetable of activities and outline the needs of the children in the class/group.

We will share details about them any other responsibilities/First Aid arrangements/a wet weather plan

**Child Protection/Confidentiality**

You may be keen to share the highlights of your day with family/friends, but please DO NOT identify individual children by name. Please do not take photographs. Please respect our children and families. If you feel concerned about the welfare of a child, please talk to the class teacher.

**Behaviour**

* Resist any temptation to accept lower standards of behaviour. The different hazards that children may be exposed to away from the school will require them to observe standards of behaviour that are at least as high as – or higher than – in the classroom.
* If one adult has to give prolonged attention to one child, the group leader needs to let the class teacher know.
* Group leaders should trust their own knowledge of the children and common sense.

**Travel**

* Ensure that children wear seatbelts
* Swap window seats on the return journey, if necessary, to avoid arguments
* Supervise your group when boarding and leaving a vehicle
* Chat to/play with children on the journey

**Buddies**

Children may be paired with a buddy (partner). Buddies regularly check that their partner is ok.

**Safety**

Whatever the nature of the visit, regular head-counting of the children should take place, particularly leaving a venue. Please carry a list/register of the children in your group at all times.

**Top Tips for a Successful Visit:**

* Walk on the outside of the pavement
* Watch out for wing mirrors, other hazards
* Expect high standards of behaviour
* Don’t share sweets, share conversations and stories instead
* Be confidential about the behaviour of other children/adults
* Ask the children LOADS of questions about their learning
* Don’t mention the ‘T’ word unless it’s a good time to!

**Policies**

A number of key policies have been used in the writing of this handbook. They are as follows:-

Behaviour

E-Safety

Equality

First Aid

Health and Safety

Nursery

Safeguarding

Staff Handbook

Most policies are available on the school website ([www.stokehill.devon.sch.uk](http://www.stokehill.devon.sch.uk)), but if you require a paper copy please ask at the school office.

**Appendices:**

Volunteer Protocol Sheet

Acceptable User Agreement

Volunteer Suitability Declaration

DBS Application

Federation Volunteer Application Form