

MCA Volunteer Helpers' Guidelines

At Meopham Community Academy we welcome and appreciate all helpers, including Parents and Grandparents. We all work hard to create and maintain a loving, caring, challenging and supportive school environment. We ask that you take the time to read and follow these simple guidelines.

Points to note:

- Remember you have been placed in a position of trust. All information you might see or hear about a child is of a confidential nature. Please do not talk about any child outside of the school.
- All helpers must adhere to the current Disclosure and Barring Service check (previously CRB) rulings – if you are volunteering once a week or more, on 4 days within any 30 day period or overnight, you will be expected to agree to an enhanced DBS check.
- Please do not use the opportunity as a helper to seek additional information about your own child e.g. looking in trays, books, asking Class Teachers about your child's progress.
- All helpers must work under the guidance and direction of the Class Teacher.
- If a child needs to be reprimanded, this is the responsibility of the Class Teacher, not the helper.
- Please be specific with the Class Teacher about the dates and times you are available to help.
- If you are helping on a regular basis and are unable to attend, please let the office staff know as soon as possible.
- All helpers have access to the Safeguarding Briefing Paper. **You must read and sign this before helping in each class for the first time. The class teacher will provide you with the necessary forms.**
- Helpers may offer to assist teachers with specific activities or alternatively show an interest in undertaking duties which do not involve working alongside children e.g. mounting work, photocopying, laminating etc.
- You are in school to support the needs of a group of children, not just your own child. Only in exceptional circumstances will you be asked to work on a one to one basis with your child. However, you may find that your child is in the group you have been asked to work with. If you are working in the same environment as your own child, do not treat them any differently from the other children.
- Be aware of the school rights and responsibilities and also the individual class rights and responsibilities which will be on display in the classroom. Refer to these and always encourage the children to follow them.

- If you have been asked to hear a child read please date and initial their reading record. Write a positive comment about their reading, and whilst listening, please give lots of praise and encouragement.
- The staffroom is an area for working staff and trainee professionals only.

Confidentiality and Child Protection:

Whilst you are helping in school if you hear comments or observe situations that concern you **must** in the first instance discuss the issue with the Class Teacher or Senior member of staff. You are asked to respect confidentiality and therefore requested not to discuss other children or situations with other parents outside of the school building.

If you are approached by another parent, asking for information about their child or class or school matter, please refer the parent to the Class Teacher or Senior member of staff.

Your help and support is very much valued. We hope that you enjoy helping in school and find it to be a rewarding experience.

Handy Hints for Helpers:

To ensure the health, safety and enjoyment of everyone involved we have drawn up the following guidelines:

Do

- Sign in when you arrive at school.
- Ensure you are clear as to your role and that you have discussed the activities to be carried out with the Class Teacher.
- Talk at the appropriate level with the child taking into account their age.
- Discuss the task in hand and keep the children focused.
- Encourage children to adhere to class/school rights and responsibilities.
- Help children finish and tidy up after a task.
- Direct a child to the Class Teacher if you are unsure of something.
- Encourage independence, use questions such as “what do you think you should do next?”
- Encourage children to work quietly, reinforce this by using a quiet voice yourself.
- Encourage children to move quietly and calmly within the school without running.
- Use appropriate language.

- Always encourage the children to do their best and give them a lot of praise.
- Encourage them to do as much as they can. Never tell a child off for not being able to complete a task.
- Dress appropriately in a smart but practical way. Please do not wear clothes which could be considered revealing.

Do not

- Take children out of the room without a friend and never accompany them into the toilet alone.
- Help a child change their clothes whilst alone with them.
- Hold on forcibly to or strike a child.
- Reprimand a child verbally or physically – if you are unhappy about a child's behaviour alert the Class Teacher.
- Swear in front of the children.
- Use mobile phones during lessons and within the school.
- If you have your mobile phone on you ensure it is either off or in silent mode.
- Smoke on-site.

If at any time you are in any way uncertain as to what is expected of you or how to deal with a child or situation seek the advice of the Class Teacher immediately.