

Child Protection advice for volunteers

Thank you for your interest in becoming a volunteer. As a school we are committed to safeguarding and meeting the needs of our children and we hope this leaflet will provide some useful advice and information when working with children in Yarmouth CE Primary School.

What are my responsibilities as a volunteer?

All those who come into contact with children through their every day work whether paid or voluntary are responsible for their own actions and behaviour and should avoid any conduct which would lead a reasonable person to question their motivation or intentions. We all have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of the children. Adults should take advice promptly from their line manager or another senior member of staff about any incident which could give rise to concern.

CRB checks

All staff including supply staff, regular visitors and volunteers are subject to Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks. This is to help ensure that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children. You will be advised of your responsibilities in this matter.

CRB forms are available from the school office and the Administrative Officer will help you complete the application form and advise which documentation is necessary for you to present for the check to be completed.

It is important to inform the Headteacher immediately if you become subject to any criminal investigation, caution or conviction. This helps to protect you as well as the young people in your care.

What should I do if I am worried about a child?

If whilst working with a child you become concerned about:

- Comments made by a child
- Marks or bruising on a child
- Changes in the child's behaviour or demeanour

Please report these concerns to the Head teacher, who is the Designated Person for Child Protection. And to Mrs Paula Blackley in her absence.

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 as children rarely lie about such matters

- Listen to what is being said without displaying shock or disbelief, accept what is being said
- Allow the child to talk freely, listen rather than ask direct questions.
- Reassure the child, but do not make promises that might not be possible to keep
- Do not promise confidentiality but explain to the child that you have to tell their teacher or Headteacher in order that they can help them
- **Do not interrogate** the child or **ask leading questions**
- Reassure the pupil that it is not their fault
- Stress that it was the right thing to tell
- Do not criticise the alleged perpetrator

Record details of the disclosure immediately, including wherever possible the exact words or phrases used by the child. Report your concerns and give your written record to the school's Designated Person for Child Protection to enable the matter to be dealt with in the most appropriate way

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

You should report such allegations to the Headteacher.

What should I do if the alleged abuser is the Headteacher?

Report such allegations to the Chair of Governors.

How do I assure that my behaviour is always appropriate?

- Provide a good example and a positive role model by behaving in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner.
- Appropriate relationships with children should be based on mutual trust and respect. In particular your attention is drawn to the provisions of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, which creates a new criminal offence of abuse of a position of trust.
- Children, especially when they are young are often spontaneously affectionate and tactile and it is important not to alienate them through lack of response or by appearing to reject this. You should, however, be careful about touching pupils. Only touch pupils for professional reasons, and when this is necessary and appropriate for the pupil's well being or safety.
- Treat all pupils equally - never build "special" relationships or confer favour on particular pupils
- As a volunteer you may well be working closely with children sometimes on a one to one basis. 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.
- Do not photograph pupils (unless requested to by the class teacher), exchange e-mails, text messages, phone numbers or give out your own personal details.
- Do not give or receive (other than token) gifts unless arranged through school.

Please help us to safeguard the children in our care by following these guidelines.