



Parental Involvement/Volunteer Policy

Introduction

It is Park Lane's wish to maintain and promote an active and meaningful partnership with parents/carers, other adults and members of the community. As a school we can never emphasise too much, the great importance and value which parents/carers and volunteers can make to the work, life and potential positive growth of the entire school.

Volunteers are able to share their experience, knowledge and skills with the school, with the primary aim of bringing benefits to the students and the local community. It also, allows volunteers to develop their own skills and experience to enhance their employment opportunities.

Aims

- To forge a partnership, focused on the development of a child's whole education and achievement of skills and knowledge through greater individual attention and guidance.
- That parental/volunteer strengths and skills are both developed and supported to the mutual benefit of all concerned.
- That staff, where necessary plan and structure activities to help cater for parental/volunteer involvement and expertise, and to give instructions and guidance to parents as appropriate.
- To encourage parents/volunteers to take an active role in the education of students and provide general support to the school.
- To ensure efficient lines of communication are maintained.
- School to provide, where possible, opportunities for parents/volunteers to progress with their interests, enthusiasm and skills.
- For the support of parental/voluntary help to broaden and enhance the delivery of the National Curriculum.

Support and Supervision

Volunteers will be supported and supervised by a named person, who will be allocated at the induction period. This person will provide the volunteer with supervision, where the volunteer will receive feedback on their work and progress, have the opportunity to discuss future work and a chance to discuss other issues at regular intervals. This supervision will take place in a supportive and confidential environment.

Induction Information

Volunteers will receive appropriate induction, which will include information on the aims and objectives of the School. Additional information will be provided to help the volunteer in their work. Park Lane Learning Trust will strive to make the information sessions accessible and relevant to the volunteers' needs. Volunteers will also have opportunities to develop knowledge and skills through training provided at appropriate times.

Expenses

Volunteers will be reimbursed travel and other approved expenses. Travel expenses are payable for any journey needed to be made in the course of volunteer duties. Volunteers using a car should inform their insurance company that they are using their car for business purposes. To claim expenses supporting receipts must be provided. Only agreed expenses will be paid for by the School

Health & Safety Procedures

- Parents/volunteers should be fully aware of the school's Health and Safety Policy and evacuation procedures.
- As part of the induction procedures all parents/volunteers will be made aware of safeguarding procedures.
- Parents/volunteers must be provided with a safe working environment.
- Staff should ensure the safety of students when working with parents/volunteers during practical sessions i.e. food technology/resistant materials.
- Parents/volunteers who are working unsupervised will be required to undertake a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before working alone with students can commence.

Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by the school's policy while engaged in approved work. However, parents/volunteer's own personal belongings, including any motor vehicles, are not covered by our insurance.

Absence

In the event of absence, volunteers are expected to telephone and inform their named person or the office, prior to their start time, so appropriate arrangements can be made if any cover is required.

Voluntary Work and Social Security Benefit

If you are in receipt of benefits it is your responsibility to check how volunteering may affect your benefits.

The main benefit which could be affected by volunteering is Incapacity benefit. The Department for Social Security will want to know what kind of voluntary work you will be doing and what is involved.

Volunteer Code of Conduct

The following is an expectation of all parent/volunteers in their capacity as a volunteer at Park Lane Learning Trust. Volunteers will:

- Respect other volunteers, students and parents and make them feel welcomed and valued.
- Be sensitive towards others.
- Be approachable and pleasant
- Dress and behave in a manner which promotes healthy and safe working practices and is mindful and respectful of the cultural diversity of our local community.
- Maintain the confidentiality of personal information at all times.

All volunteers should be aware of how their behaviour can affect colleagues and students. Everyone has the responsibility to avoid becoming involved in situations that could bring the School into disrepute.

Internet Use Code of Conduct

This code exists to safeguard and promote the correct use of the School's internet and email facilities and volunteers are responsible for familiarising themselves with the school's policies on internet use.

Volunteers are responsible for using these facilities in an efficient, effective, ethical and lawful manner. Use of the internet and emails may be monitored at any time for legitimate safety reasons.

Equal Opportunities

Park Lane Learning Trust recognises that the activity of volunteering can provide an individual with experience and opportunities for self and career development. In accordance with School's Equal Opportunity Policy, volunteer placements will therefore be open to individuals irrespective of race, gender, disability, sexuality, age or marital status. Where a prospective volunteer demonstrates hostility or a clear lack of support for equal opportunities, she/he will be deemed automatically unsuitable for a volunteer position at Park Lane Learning Trust. All volunteers are required to make a commitment to this policy. A copy can be given on request.

Working Hours

The hours of work will be discussed and mutually agreed between the volunteer and the named person or co-ordinator. The volunteer must be committed and adhere to the voluntary placement and allocated working hours.

Lunch Breaks

Volunteers who are in school all day must take, at least 30 minutes for a lunch break and can either purchase lunch in the restaurant or use the facilities in the staff room.

Holidays

School volunteers must adhere to the school's policy on leave of absence during term time.

Data Protection/Confidentiality

Park Lane Learning Trust has a confidentiality policy. All volunteers will be asked to read and sign the Data Protection Policy and follow its principles.

Volunteers may have access to personal information about some individuals, or other information which may be confidential. The school needs to be able to trust its volunteers with such information, which is confidential. Volunteers who break this confidentiality will be asked to leave.

Termination of Agreement

We would normally expect volunteers to commit to at least 3 months of volunteering. The voluntary opportunity may be extended if considered by the volunteer co-ordinator or volunteer supervisor. There is also the opportunity to terminate the agreement by mutual consent.

The Headteacher reserves the right to terminate an agreement if the volunteer does not adhere to the rules, policies and practices of the School.

Child Protection & Safeguarding

All volunteers have the responsibility to report any concern that they may have regarding Child Protection to the volunteer co-ordinator or designated named person. It is not the role for the volunteer to investigate concerns. The School's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy explains the guidelines and procedures to follow regarding any suspicions. A copy of this policy is available on request.

Disciplinary Procedures

The purpose of this procedure is to encourage all volunteers to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of conduct, attendance and performance. This procedure is intended to improve performance and resolve difficulties.

When an action is taken against a volunteer under the disciplinary procedure they will be given every opportunity to present their case and a right to appeal against any disciplinary decision that they consider to be either unfair or unjust.

The School's Disciplinary Procedure explains clearly the principles and the procedures followed when disciplinary action is taken against anyone. A copy of these procedures is available on request.

Grievance Procedures

The purpose of the procedure is first to allow the volunteer to freely express a complaint or matter of concern and then, where appropriate, to try and resolve the issues raised by means of a discussion and negotiation or, if necessary, counselling or training. If you feel aggrieved by any matter which arises during voluntary work, this should first be raised with the volunteer co-ordinator. If still not resolved, then it can be taken to a senior member of staff. This will normally be done verbally at each stage, and you are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow employee or a friend.

If you are unable to achieve satisfaction by this procedure, the final decision on action will be taken by the Headteacher, followed by the Disciplinary Committee of the Governing Body.

The School's Grievance Procedure explains clearly the principles and protocol followed when a grievance has taken place. A copy of this is available upon request.

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed every three years.