

Ambler School and Children's Centre

Policy

Information and Code of Conduct for Volunteers

February 2014



Next review with Finance and Personnel Committee: February 2016

This plan is subject to on-going change and will be updated as and when required.

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1. Introduction

Ambler Primary School and Children's Centre highly values parents and others who volunteer to help out with school activities. We hope to encourage your support, contributions and assistance. Many school activities would be at risk if it weren't for your help and many of our pupils benefit greatly from it.

It is our duty to ensure that whilst you are engaged in voluntary activities for the school that we care for you and ensure your safety. We also, of course, have a duty to ensure that our pupils' welfare is promoted, they are cared for appropriately and they are safeguarded from any harm.

This information is to inform you of what measures we need to apply to ensure that all volunteers and pupils are safe and cared for.

2. Disclosure Barring Service

We have a responsibility to ensure that all adults working for the school are suitable people to work with children. The Department for Children Schools and Families and the Local Authority set out guidance regarding when adults working on behalf of the school must be subject to these checks. This means that depending on the nature and regularity of your help, also the level of contact you have with children, we will need to ask for your permission for a DBS check.

This check is to ensure that you are not included on Independent Safeguarding Authority list of those people who have been barred from working with children, you do not have relevant convictions, and the police do not have any other information about you which suggests that you may be unsuitable to work with children.

We appreciate that some volunteers find this intrusive and unacceptable, however, we wish to reassure you that this information is solely for the purpose of ensuring that our pupils are safe from unsuitable people. We can further assure you that this information will be kept confidential to those who 'need to know' (usually the headteacher, the business manager and the Local Authority) and securely stored. If you do have convictions this does not mean that you will be considered unsuitable, usually this would only apply if a person has convictions for offences against children, sex offences or offences of serious violence.

No checks will be undertaken without your agreement and you will receive a copy of the check.

In some instances we may ask for your permission to seek information from another person regarding your suitability to work with children e.g. from an employer.

If you have any concerns or would like further information about checks, please discuss these with the Headteacher.

3. Welfare and Safety of Casual/Agency Staff and Children

We undertake to ensure that any activities which you are involved with are planned properly and safely, also that you are consulted on and informed of these plans. This helps us to make sure that you are happy and comfortable with the arrangements, also that you have the opportunity to make us aware of any anticipated difficulties, reservations or problems which arise. We further undertake to ensure that at all times you will have access to a member of the school staff should any emergencies arise or you need to talk to someone immediately regarding any difficulties.

4. Code of Safe Conduct

It is essential that we acknowledge that the vast majority of volunteers behave appropriately whilst working with our pupils. However, expected conduct of adults working in or for a school is sometimes different to that which applies whilst caring for our own children. Conduct is also governed by certain laws and government guidance (e.g. smacking other people's children is not allowed). Further, staff and volunteers sometimes express uncertainty as to what is and isn't acceptable and ask for guidance regarding those behaviours which, whilst most probably innocent, may be considered illegal, improper or could be misconstrued by another person.

The following, therefore, gives a guide to appropriate conduct whilst working in or on behalf of Ambler school (e.g. residential visits, out of school activities). Adherence to this code will ensure that both children and adults are safe, including from the possibility of allegations being made against them.

You should always:

- Adhere to all school policies, many of which are specifically written with safeguarding in mind. For example: Child Protection, Behaviour, Physical Intervention, Anti Bullying, Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Use of Images (photography and DVD), Disability Discrimination, E safety....
- Behave in a mature, respectful, safe, fair and considered manner at all times.
- Provide a good example and 'positive role model' to the pupils
- Observe other people's right to confidentiality (Unless you need to report something to the Headteacher or Child Protection Officer e.g. concerns about a child protection issue).
- Treat all children equally; never confer favour on particular children, or build 'special relationships' with individual children, except where one to one working is part of a plan agreed with your manager (e.g. for counselling, tuition, mentoring or other purpose).

Report to the Head teacher / Head of Care (or in the case of an allegation concerning the Headteacher the Chair of Governors): (As soon as possible)

- Any behaviour or situation which may give rise to complaint, misunderstanding or misinterpretation, against yourself.
- Any difficulties that you are experiencing, for example, coping with a child presenting particularly challenging behaviour; situations where you anticipate that you may not be sufficiently qualified, trained or experienced to deal with or handle appropriately.
- Any behaviours of another adult in the school which give you cause for concern or breach of this code of conduct or other school policies and procedures

You should never:

- Behave in a manner that could lead a reasonable person to question your conduct, intentions or suitability to care for other people's children.
- Touch children in a manner which is or may be considered sexual, threatening, gratuitous or intimidating.
- Discriminate either favourably or unfavourably towards any child.
- Give personal contact details, text email or telephone, or make arrangements to contact, communicate or meet children outside of school.
- Develop 'personal' or sexual relationships with children.
- Push, hit, kick, punch, slap, throw missiles at or smack a child or threaten to do so
- Make inappropriate* remarks or jokes of a personal, sexual, racial, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise offensive nature.
- Be sarcastic, embarrass or humiliate, make remarks or "jokes" to children of a personal, racist, discriminatory, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate* or offensive nature
- Give or receive (other than 'token') gifts unless arranged through your line manager / Headteacher, for example, outgrown sports kit, football boots or uniform.
- Allow, encourage or condone children to act in an illegal, improper or unsafe manner e.g. smoking or drinking alcohol.
- Behave in an illegal or unsafe manner, for example, speeding, being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, driving a vehicle which is known to be un-roadworthy or otherwise unsafe or not having appropriate insurance, using a mobile phone whilst driving, fail to use seatbelts and drive in a safe manner at all times whilst transporting children.
- Undertake any work with children when you are not in a fit and proper physical or emotional state to do so. For example: under the influence of medication which induces drowsiness; with a medical condition which dictates that you should not be caring for children; under extreme stress which is likely to impair your judgement.

*** Please note:**

It is the perception of the person subject to a remark or action rather than your stated intention that defines 'appropriate' or 'inappropriate'.

If you have any concerns in relation to Child Protection e.g. something a child says/does any marks etc. something that doesn't feel right:

During the school day you should bring this to the attention of:

- The class teacher or;
- A member of the Senior Leadership Team (Juliet Benis, Natalie Creed, Maria Galster)

If you have any concerns out of the school day (3.30pm – 6.00pm) please inform a member of:

- Extended Day Team or;
- Member of Senior Leadership Team who are on site

Safeguarding yourself

Consider:

- How you talk to or touch children in the context of the activity you are providing

Children don't always understand sarcasm and will often take things said very literally

Amber Primary School and Children's Centre

Code of conduct

DRESS CODE

The staff at Ambler, take pride in their appearance and wear smart, professional, comfortable clothing which is appropriate to their role. All staff employed by or volunteering at Ambler:

1. Do not wear any clothing that can be seen 'up, down or through' and are mindful of the length of skirts and shorts and of the depth of necklines
2. Wear footwear that is suitable for moving safely inside the building as well as outdoors
3. Ensure that any slogans on clothing are of an appropriate and inoffensive nature
4. Ensure that tattoos are, where possible covered but where they are more visible are appropriate to working with children
5. Do not have fingernails which are too long and could be a health and safety concern when e.g. changing babies' nappies
6. Do not wear jewellery that distracts from their role or that could cause a health and safety concern to themselves or others e.g. very large hoop / dangly earrings
7. Act as role models to the children and do not wear blue denim in an effort to support and drive the school uniform

MEETING AND GREETING

Staff at Ambler, recognise the importance of building positive relationships with all stakeholders. The team maintain a friendly, approachable and professional manner and understand the importance of listening and being supportive. Staff endeavour to:

1. Use the stakeholders' name
2. Keep good eye contact
3. Remain calm and professional particularly when dealing with sensitive situations
4. Welcome all visitors with a friendly manner
5. Make positive first impressions
6. Communicate (whether face to face or the phone) in a polite manner

ICT

The use of ICT is integral to many aspects of an educational setting and is used to enhance general practice, staff at Ambler:

1. Follow the e-safety policy at all times
2. Do not use their personal mobile phones when working with children or when in public areas e.g. outreach area

3. Do not use computers / the internet for personal reasons in public areas or during work time
4. Check that the websites they intend to use with pupils are appropriate prior to lessons / learning
5. Ensure that work stations are not left open allowing potentially sensitive material to be viewed by others
6. Are aware that certain items (e.g. ipads) and networks are used by both staff and children and therefore do not download inappropriate or personal apps / documents
7. Do not make comments about work, school or children on social networking sites and do not make social connections with present or past students who are under 18 e.g. Facebook friend requests
8. Check work email regularly (daily where possible)

DIALOGUE AND COMMUNICATION

Staff members at Ambler demonstrate integrity both inside and outside of the School and Children's Centre in their conduct towards everyone. They earn the trust of stakeholders in how sensitive information and relationships are dealt with and:

1. Remain mindful of confidentiality and communicate responsibly being respectful of how you discuss peoples' lives
2. Respond professionally to informal information and seek advice when unsure of what your responsibility is
3. Use appropriate language and tone of voice
4. Are sensitive to the people/person they are communicating with
5. Do not hold personal conversations around children
6. Listen to all, and are polite/friendly
7. Remain professional regardless of means of communication
8. Understand how to speak to children and other adults and are positive role models
9. Difficulties with relationships in the provision are dealt with together
10. Maintain a professional approach with parents and carers when communicating with them e.g. Organising official meetings, when necessary
11. Ensure comprehensive handover of information among staff when there is a change of personnel e.g. job share / lunchtime supervisor / specialist teaching staff / extended day care

MAINTAINING GOOD PRACTICE

Staff at Ambler, are involved in developing and maintaining good practice to support the children and parents/carers to 'achieve more' and:

1. Have an awareness of health and safety, child protection procedures, knowing designated members of staff (safeguarding policy and procedures)
2. Consistently model good practice and always intervene when they see someone acting inappropriately or in a way that contradicts good practice
3. Consider all aspect of a child's life and their individual needs when working with and supporting children and adults
4. Are aware of professional boundaries with parents including not working or babysitting for parents in a private capacity (safeguarding)
5. Maintain a 'can do', positive attitude
6. Are punctual and ready for work
7. Share responsibility and ownership for the work, vision and ethos of the school and children's centre
8. Are open to developing their own practice and supporting the development of others
9. Strive to maintain an open door policy in all communications with each other and other stakeholders

FOOD

Our belief is that a balanced healthy, nutritious diet is important for the development of a child's physical state, as well as for their intellectual abilities

and staff:

1. Are aware of staff and children's allergies e.g. nut allergies – we promote a 'nut free' provision
2. Respect cultural backgrounds / cultural difference
3. Drive hygiene and ensure hand washing routines are in place particularly when working with food
4. Ensure children have the opportunity to make their own choices in food selection and are aware of children's eating habits
5. Promote good table manners and eat with children at mealtimes on a rota basis
6. Eat in private or in designated areas at appropriate times (e.g. not during learning time) and not in public areas at any time other than e.g. shared lunches with children
7. Refrain from taking hot drinks to classrooms / work rooms
8. Encourage children at mealtimes to try new foods and have new eating experiences
9. Promote good and healthy diets in the classroom / curriculum

I _____ have read the school's information for volunteers and agree to abide by the Code of Safe Conduct therein.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Many thanks for your support of the school and it's arrangements for the safety and care of children and adults in our school community

.....Headteacher

Updated: February 2014