



Mission statement:

**'Opening minds, unlocking potential, celebrating success together'**

**WE WELCOME YOU INTO OUR SCHOOL AND THANK YOU FOR YOUR OFFER OF HELP**

**INTRODUCTION**

The school actively encourages good relationships between school, home and the community. The children benefit from the voluntary help given by parents and others in the community, but the acceptance of that voluntary help always depends upon its appropriateness.

In the interests of the safety and well being of our children, helpers must read this policy and sign the insert as an acceptance of the policy and return it to the school.

**CONFIDENTIALITY** - It is **very important** that anyone working in the school is aware of the necessity for **total confidentiality** regarding any information learned about any individual - child or adult. Helpers should feel able to express concerns in an atmosphere of mutual trust. If you have any adverse observations or concerns about school procedures etc. please bring them to the attention of Mrs Cowans (Headteacher) or Mr Hassan (Deputy Headteacher) to enable them to either explain or look into your comments.

**PERMISSION TO WORK IN SCHOOL**

In accordance with government guidelines, it is necessary that a [DBS Online Application - DBS \(Formerly CRB\) Check](#) is completed for any new helper working in school. Further information is available from Mrs Walker at the school office.

**PARENTS WITH PRE-SCHOOL CHILDREN**

We are unable to accept any offers of help in school if it would mean a pre-school child would also have to attend.

**OUT OF SCHOOL QUESTIONS**

You should refer anyone asking you questions regarding the school, staff member or a child at the school to Mrs Cowans or Mr Hassan who can discuss their questions with them.

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## STAFFROOM

All visitors to the school are very welcome to use the staffroom.

We would ask you to consider the safety aspect of children near hot drinks and it would be appreciated if you could wash up cups after use.

## FIRE DRILL

Please familiarise yourself with the fire policy and fire safety notices. All fire exits are clearly labelled. If you do hear the fire bell, please take part in the drill leaving by the nearest and safest exit, taking any child in your care with you to the fire assembly point on the yard.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

Please make sure that you sign the Visitors' Book located in the School Office before commencing work in school. You will also be given a Visitor's Badge to wear. Please remember to sign out and return your badge before leaving.

If any child you are working with should sustain an injury please inform the class teacher immediately. Mrs Stephens, Mrs Walker, Mr Hassan, and Mrs Cowans are qualified first aiders. Please do not treat an injured child yourself.

**Designated Person for Child Protection - contact Mrs L Cowans or Mr D Hassan** if you have any concerns about anything a child may tell you. Helpers should avoid being with one child in isolation.

The class teacher should inform you if any child you will be working with has a specific need. Potentially unsafe equipment should never be left unattended; this is especially the case with sewing equipment and cooking utensils. Children should be kept well out of the way of hot ovens.

The school operates a strictly no smoking on the school premises policy.

## TIME AND PLACES TO WORK

Please arrange a convenient, regular time to come and help in school with your child's class teacher. If you are ever unable to help when you are expected, please ring the school to let us know as soon as possible, as the teacher will have planned for you. Normally you will be working in the classroom, hall or shared area.

Whilst many parents prefer to work in their child's class this may not always be possible. If a teacher feels that your presence helping in your own child's class is having an adverse affect on your child, they may ask you either to defer working in the school until your child is more settled or if you would be willing to help elsewhere. Similarly, if one particular class has a lot of parent helpers and others do not, we may ask you if you would mind working elsewhere for the benefit of all pupils in school.

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## WORK YOU MAY BE ASKED TO DO

You may be asked to help with a variety of tasks with the children. These may include: reading, playing language or mathematical games, art, design or technology activities, cooking, gardening, after school clubs or accompanying school trips including swimming.

We like to give people jobs they feel happy and confident about. Please do tell us what you would particularly enjoy doing with the children!

## TASKS

Teachers and helpers will agree the activity to be carried out. Preferably this will be an activity which a helper enjoys, and feels he/she can make a contribution to in school. We want all helpers to enjoy their time spent in our school.

Teachers and helpers should feel able to request that the task is changed or halted if necessary and express concerns in an atmosphere of mutual trust.

## PUPIL BEHAVIOUR

Teachers are delighted to hear about tasks which have gone well and where pupils have responded well. Showing your pleasure in a task well done is encouraging to children as well as staff.

Helpers should show a kindly, caring attitude towards pupils but not accept disrespectful behaviour. They must **NEVER** chastise a pupil physically, and always refer a child to a member of staff if the child is behaving badly and failing to co-operate.

Helpers should not feel they have failed if they have to return children they are unable to manage, or where they are uncomfortable with the relationship.

**There will be a wide range of ability in each class so please remember every piece of information you learn about any child in school is strictly confidential.**

**I am sure you understand how distressing it could be to hear about your child from another person.**

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## SOME SPECIFIC ACTIVITY GUIDANCE

### READING

Helpers often listen to children read.

Please **do not make written comments in home/school books**. You can add the page read to and sign the book to acknowledge the child has read to you.

Any comments written by children's parents in the home/school books should be referred to the teacher. Any comments you would like to make should be passed on to the teacher. Children can change books within their level after they have completed the associated accelerated reader quiz. If you are unsure about anything please discuss it with the teacher.

### NOTES ABOUT HELPING CHILDREN LEARN TO READ AND ENJOY BOOKS

It is important that reading is a pleasant experience. **Please do not make the child feel uncomfortable by comparing their reading with their peers.**

All children progress at different rates. Our aim is to make children life-long readers - not just reading at school and never again. If a child does not understand what he/she is reading it is a pointless activity. All children need teaching and support but some will need extra help to enable progress. Periods of reading should be short. Children may choose to read for longer and enjoy books, shared or alone. Reading is not just reading school schemes. It may be sharing a library book, talking about the story after reading alone, maths instructions or instructions on work sheet.

### STARTING THE SESSION

Find a quiet place. Make sure that the child holds the book and not you! It is better for the child to have the book on the table in front of him/her when reading aloud to someone.

Look at the pictures and discuss them.

If it is a passage - a continuation of a story, talk about the story so far.

Ask the child to predict what will happen next.

For some children remind them, or re read the first part to them.

New book: Look at front and back covers and discuss. Look through pictures - talk about them.

"Let's have a go" - meaning I'll help at times.

Younger children should be encouraged to point to the words. (Please do not do it for them.) Be sure to encourage respect for books (turning pages carefully and not folding the book back).

Praise at every opportunity.

Praise for: reading sentence correctly; correcting him/herself; making sensible guesses; using context; using phonic knowledge (letter sounds); getting the word correct when given a prompt.

Give the child time to think of unknown words - don't jump in too quickly. Equally don't leave children too long.

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Encourage guesses of unknown words using pictures, context and phonic knowledge.

If child knows text from memory - follow text with finger. Ask - "Where does it say ... ..?"

Play 'hunt the word' game afterwards or before if you know the child may need reminding.

Make it fun - not a chore.

Allow the child to talk about their book.

Too much over-correcting spoils enjoyment of reading.

### **STRATEGIES FOR UNKNOWN WORD**

Pause briefly

Look at the picture - (re-read last few words of text and pause)

Look at the first letter - young children. Look at first three letters - better readers

Tell the child the letter sound if s/he does not know it

Where the child is able, split longer words to help them, e.g. to...day

If it is a difficult word/proper noun - tell

If it is distracting to the story - tell

i.e. **PAUSE ... PROMPT ... PRAISE.**

Children's moods change. Progress may not be constant. Be sensitive to how the child is feeling.

Reading should be free from worry - non-competitive with peers.

Children love repetition and the familiar. Repeat an enjoyed story.

Encourage expression.

Talk about the passage.

Ask questions like ... "Which did you like best?" "Why?" & "What would you have done if ...?"

If you are feeling irritated or impatient ... **STOP**

Don't ever get cross.

Talk to the teacher.

End with **THANK YOU, GREAT! WELL DONE!** Or some similar praise.

When a child is reading very well, then you can ask them to read out loud to you in a clear voice so that it is really interesting. This is a skill in itself. You could encourage expression/voices for speakers. Question vocabulary understanding and ask questions about the story, especially if the meaning is hidden.

Finish on a positive note so that the child looks forward to the next session. Indicate you are looking forward to it.

Please put the page number in the child's reading record.

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### **COOKING WITH CHILDREN IN SCHOOL**

It is very helpful to talk to a member of staff or parent who has already cooked in school with children.

Ensure that you have no more than four children in your group.

Make sure you are prepared and confident with the recipe.

Please prepare utensils and ingredients beforehand.

Please ensure that the children have washed their hands, are wearing aprons and have long hair tied back.

It is very important that you talk to the children about what they are doing.

**Remember - the children should be cooking and not just you!**

Introduce appropriate vocabulary e.g. ingredients, weighing, kneading, and discuss the processes with them.

"What does the dough feel like?"

"Why do you think it is light and fluffy?"

"In what way has the mixture changed?"

Be aware of the safety aspects involved in cooking.

Any pupils causing you concern should be referred to the teacher.

### **Art and Klart**

You may be asked to help prepare the snack for the children. Please remember food hygiene.

The class teacher will run the session and guide you in your role. Allow the children to have a go themselves; your role is to support the children not do it for them.

It is very important that you talk to the children about what they are doing. Encourage the children to tidy up after themselves.

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THIS.**

(If you do have any further questions please contact Mrs Cowans or Mr Hassan)

**Please complete the form below and return it to the school office.**

**We look forward to working with you.**

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**VOLUNTARY HELP AT HAMSTERLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

I have read, understood, and agree with the school's policy and guidelines for parents and other people in the community who come into school as voluntary helpers.

Name .....

Signed ..... Date .....

Helper status (parent/student/community, etc.) .....

Helping (teacher/class) .....

If you have any medical circumstances (ie: diabetes, allergies etc.) that the school should be aware of in an emergency please give details here (these will not inhibit your ability to help in school):

Please give emergency contact and telephone number in case of emergency

Please sign and return prior to starting work in school.

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For office use only:-

DBS check completed: Yes/No                      Date:

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