



Tel/Fax: 061 – 51 59 27
Email: info@smnslimerick.ie
Website: www.smnslimerick.ie
Uimh. Rolla: 12854 S

Volunteers Working in School Policy

Introduction

Volunteers in our school bring with them a range of skills and experience that can enhance the learning opportunities of pupils. The Board of Management welcomes and encourages volunteers from the local community and parent body.

The types of activities that volunteers engage in, on behalf of the school, include:

- Hearing pupils read
- Working with small groups of pupils to assist them in their learning
- Working alongside individual pupils, as an additional tutor
- Accompanying school visits
- Teaching the pupils a new skill

Child Protection

Saint Michael's N.S. is committed to protecting the pupils in its care. The Board of Management of Saint Michael's has adopted and implemented the Department's Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post Primary Schools 2017 as part of this overall Child Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment. All volunteers working in the school are required to be Garda Vetted through the Church of Ireland Board of Education. Attention should be drawn to the displayed Safeguarding Statement and Risk Assessment at the start of a volunteer's first visit and explained to them as necessary. They should be told the name of the Designated Liaison Person and Deputy Designation Liaison Person and how they can find them if needed.

Becoming a Volunteer

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer, either for a one off event such as a school visit or on a more regular basis, should approach the class teacher or principal and make his/her wish known.

Volunteers working in the school on a regular basis, should complete the Volunteer Agreement Form (Appendix 1). This does not include volunteers for short periods of time, such as accompanying the children on tours or swimming.

Regular volunteers should be provided with induction into the school's policies:

- Child Safeguarding Statement
- Code of Behaviour
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Health and Safety
- Complaints Procedure

They should also be provided with relevant training in the area in which they are assisting, e.g. strategies for listening to reading or working with a small group.

Under the patronage of the Church of Ireland

Saint Michael's National School, 11 Barrington Street, Limerick V94 A0K7

Volunteers will be not reimbursed travel or lunch expenses. They are not however, expected to provide materials for use in the classroom and any such expenses will be reimbursed, with prior agreement. Volunteers are also requested not to purchase treats for the pupils. Volunteers are never allowed to photograph or video pupils.

Confidentiality

Volunteers in school are bound by a code of confidentiality. Any concerns that volunteers have about the pupils they work with/come into contact with should be voiced with the class teacher or principal and NOT with the parents of the pupils.

Volunteers who are concerned about anything in the school, which may affect their work, should raise the matter with the principal or appropriate member of staff. Any information gained at the school about a pupil or adult should remain confidential.

Supervision

All volunteers work under the supervision of a teacher or full-time member of staff. Teachers retain ultimate responsibility for pupils at all times, including the pupils' behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should have clear guidance from the designated supervisor as to how an activity is carried out/what the expected outcome of an activity is. In the event of any query/problem regarding the pupil's understanding of a task, behaviour or their welfare, volunteers must seek further advice/guidance from their designated supervisor.

Health and Safety

The school has a Health & Safety Statement and this is made available to volunteers working in the school. An appropriate member of staff will ensure that volunteers are clear about emergency procedures (e.g. Fire Alarm Evacuation) and about any safety aspects associated with particular tasks. Volunteers need to exercise due care and attention and report any obvious hazards or concerns to the class teacher.

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints made about a volunteer will be referred to the Principal for investigation. Any complaints made by a volunteer will be dealt with in the same way. The complaint shall be investigated following the steps outlined in the school's Complaint Procedure.

Termination of volunteering agreement

All volunteers are permitted at the discretion of the Principal. Should the arrangement no longer suit the needs of the school and the pupils, the Principal may terminate the arrangement.

Monitoring and Review

This policy has been approved by the Board of Management and will be regularly reviewed and updated.

First created: January 2022

Signed:  (Chairperson)
Date: 25/01/2022

Appendix 1

Volunteer Agreement Form

Volunteers are an important and valued part of Saint Michael's N.S.. We hope that you enjoy working with us and feel a full part of our team. This agreement tells you what you can expect from us, and what we hope from you.

We, Saint Michael's National School, will do our best to:

- introduce you to how the school works and your role in it and to provide any training you need
- provide regular meetings and/or opportunities to link in with a main point of contact so that you can tell us if you are happy with how your tasks are organised and get feedback from us. Your point of contact's name is _____
- respect your skills, dignity and individual wishes and to do our best to meet them
- consult with you and keep you informed of possible changes within the organisation
- listen to you and take on board your views and opinion in our development
- provide insurance cover for you, during the course of your voluntary activity
- provide a safe workplace
- apply our equal opportunities policy
- apply our complaints procedure if there is any problem

I _____, agree:

- To work reliably to the best of my ability and to abide by any policies relevant to my work (Child Safeguarding Statement / Parental Involvement Policy / Volunteer Policy / Health and Safety Policy/ Code of Behaviour).
- To keep confidential any information about the school, pupils in the school or staff of the school, unless specifically told that information is for the public domain.
- To be punctual in attending as agreed to inform my point of contact as soon as possible if unable to attend.
- To appreciate and protect the ethos of Saint Michael's N.S.
- That there is nothing in my background or history that would constitute a liability for Saint Michael's N.S., damage its reputation or endanger its staff, Board or Parents Association members or the pupils attending its school.

Saint Michael's National School requires all volunteers to complete a Garda Vetting Form.

- I agree to be Garda Vetted for the school or can provide appropriate Garda vetting.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Volunteer

Signed: _____

Date: _____

On behalf of the school

