

Little Kingshill Combined School



Parent Helper's Handbook

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FOREWORD

Welcome to Little Kingshill Combined School.

Thank you for your support and commitment to the school.

Parent helpers really do make a difference to both children and staff who really appreciate your support. I am sure you will find it a fun and exciting role as well as a rewarding one. Please remember any time you are able to give to our school is greatly valued.

This handbook has been produced in response to requests by parent helpers for us to establish some clear parameters – to make parents comfortable when they come into school.

I hope you will find it a valuable reference source. Some of the information by its very nature can seem rather daunting, but as I am sure you will understand, the safety of the child is paramount. There is lots of practical advice to put you at your ease, together with information about the range of activities you may be asked to help with. If there is anything else you need to know, please do not hesitate to ask.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "G Sutaria". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'G'.

G Sutaria-Cassidy
Headteacher

ACTIVITIES YOU MAY BE ASKED TO HELP WITH

Don't worry- help will always be on hand. If you do not feel happy doing something, please say so!

- Reading (see notes at back of handbook)

Help with individual or group reading –small groups sharing text, talking about the story, supporting use of sounds to decode words

- Technology

Sewing, knitting, clay work, cooking, making things e.g. cars, houses, bridges, slippers, instruments, using balsa wood, papier-mâché

- Science

Taking small groups and working on investigations

E.g. electricity, making homes for mini-beasts, tests using light and shadows

- Maths

Small groups with practical activities

- Small groups on specific teacher-led tasks e.g. comprehension, role-play, using story sacks
- Geography /History: Small groups on specific teacher-led tasks

- I.C.T.
- Working with small groups on the computer, or with different programmes; using programmable toys
- Library work: Changing books, reading research, registering what children choose
- Painting/Art & Craft Work
- Mounting and trimming work for display
- Cutting paper for art – preparing resources
- Helping with display e.g. putting up backing paper, borders etc.
- Sharpening pencils for younger children
- Help prepare art lessons e.g. get paints out etc.
- Supporting younger groups during the art lesson
- Help supervise clearing up of artwork (teaching children to wash and clear up)
- Collating children's work
- Putting into folders, sorting, photocopying
- Accompanying children on trips, visits or journeys
- Helping to keep resource areas tidy
- Help support a modern foreign language
- Sports
- Help run after school sports clubs e.g. cricket and football
- Lunch
- Cleaning tables, helping children with their lunches

STAFF CONTACT

As you become more experienced as parent helpers we hope you will get to know your classroom teachers well. Please use formal methods of address in the classroom where pupils are present. This helps us maintain the professionalism of the school.

Occasionally, you may need to feedback comments to your class teacher after you have been helping. It may not always be possible to talk with her/him without interrupting the lesson, so please jot them down on a piece of paper and pass them on – again being mindful of the confidentiality aspect. We request that parent helpers do not write notes on any piece of a child's work unless directed by the teacher.

Please do not use this valuable time to discuss the progress of your own child with the teacher.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO COME IN

If you help in a classroom on a regular basis and are unable to come in for whatever reason, please do try and let the classroom teacher know. Obviously, there will be situations where advance notice may not always be possible i.e. if your child is off sick that day, However, if you do know ahead that you cannot come in, please do tell the class teacher. If the class teacher has some notice, they will be able to arrange alternative cover. Please add the school telephone number to your mobile (01494 863744) – messages can be given to the appropriate teacher.

Similarly, if there is a change in the timetable and you are not needed on a particular day, staff will do their utmost to let you know.

SUPPORT INFORMATION

The second half of this handbook contains information and guidelines on issues such as confidentiality, child protection and mobile phone use. These are not intended to put you off but, as parents yourselves, you will understand these are of paramount importance. The section also contains guidelines on school behaviour and physical contact with pupils, together with some practical advice about helping children with their reading.

SECURITY

As you will appreciate, it is important that we monitor all visitors into school, whatever the purpose of their visit.

When you arrive at school, please use the main entrance and sign in at Reception indicating which class you are helping. Apart from any security issues, it means that we are able to locate you in the event of an emergency such as a fire alarm. Parent helper identification cards should be worn whilst in school for identification purposes. These can be found at Reception and should be returned here when you sign out.

FIRE/ LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES

In the event of a fire, evacuation procedures are displayed in every classroom. Please make yourself familiar with these. Emergency equipment i.e. fire extinguishers and fire notices can be found throughout the school. Fire drills involving the whole school are held each term.

In the event of any alarm bell ringing, please follow the instructions of the nearest member of staff.

FIRST AID

The designated First Aiders at school are Mrs Baldwin, Mrs Hardy, Mrs Riley and Mrs Cooley. There are a number of children at school with a range of allergies and medical conditions. In the case of children with serious allergies, all staff are trained in the use of an Epi-pen. In an emergency, please seek the help of a member of staff or the designated First Aider **immediately**. Anaphylactic shock must be treated urgently. Epi-pens are kept in the school office. **First Aiders only should administer any first aid or medication.**

CONFIDENTIALITY

Parent helpers, by the nature of their role, may become privy to confidential information concerning pupils.

For all parents helping in school, confidentiality is vital in building trust between parents, staff and pupils. Confidentiality protects you, it protects the child and family, it gives peace of mind to all parents and it also maintains the professionalism of the school. **Please respect this.** It is unacceptable to discuss anything relating to individual members of staff or children outside school. This includes electronic messages and social networking sites.

MOBILE PHONES

It is imperative that all mobile phones are **turned off** when working in school. They cannot be used whilst you are with children. If you are expecting a call, please tell the class teacher and the

phone will be kept secure and away from children. Under **no** circumstances should your camera be used.

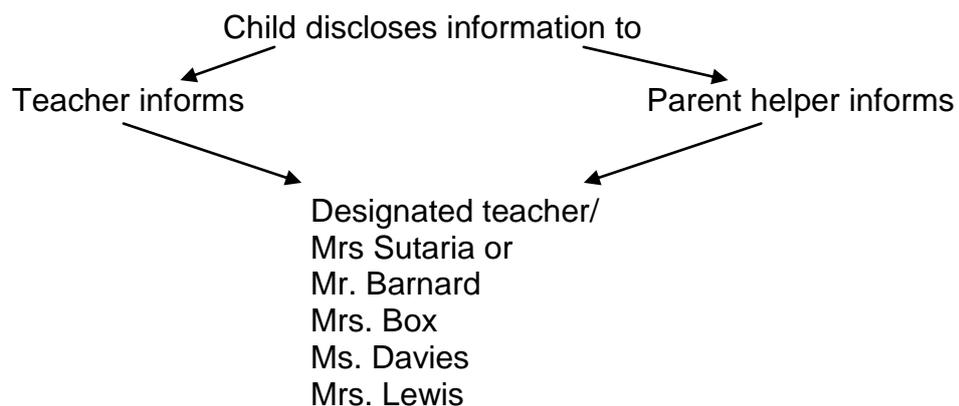
CHILD PROTECTION

Every child has the right to be in a safe, clean and a caring environment. It is the responsibility of everyone to make sure their rights are protected. The issue of child protection is a highly sensitive one, and it is crucial that all parent helpers should be aware of school policy. Every member of staff (teaching and non-teaching) and parent helpers have a responsibility to be alert to the possibility that a pupil may have been, or may be at risk.

The aim of the School Policy on Child Protection is:

- To protect the child
- To be able to recognise abuse in whatever form it takes
- To prevent any further abuse of a child
- To provide an atmosphere of support

All adults have a responsibility to protect children from abuse; this means that if you have any concern about a child you should talk to Mrs Sutaria – the designated teacher for child protection. In her absence, you should talk to Mr Barnard in the first instance or to Mrs McCammond, Mrs Box or Mrs Lewis in the Nursery. The safety of the child is of paramount importance and must override all other considerations.



If a child discloses to you, the important dos and don'ts are:

DO

Do reassure a child
Do accept information
Freely
Do give the child space and time
Do tell the child that you must
pass on the information
Do act quickly

DON'T

Don't question, just listen
Don't look shocked
Don't make judgements
Do not make promises
Do not involve anyone else
other than appropriate staff
members (see above)

PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH PUPILS

The guidelines for physical contact with pupils are largely based on common sense, but parent helpers might find it useful to know the DFE guidelines.

It is unnecessary and unrealistic to suggest that parent helpers should make physical contact with pupils only in emergencies. With younger pupils, some contact is inevitable and can give welcome reassurance to the child. However, parent helpers should bear in mind that even perfectly innocent actions can sometimes be misconstrued. Children may find being touched uncomfortable or distressing for a variety of reasons. It is important for parent helpers to be sensitive to a child's reaction to physical contact and act appropriately.

POLICE DBS CHECKS

In any unsupervised situation with children or where accompanying children on a school trip, it is essential for police checks to be carried out on parents who may be helping. This involves filling in a simple form, the details of which will be checked by the police.

It remains at the discretion of the head teacher to decide which parents are asked to help in these situations. The sole purpose of these checks is to ensure no child is put at risk and to reassure parents that every safeguard has been taken to protect the children.

PARENT HELPERS – LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents in any work they undertake with pupils, accept a duty of care. However, teachers who welcome parents as helpers into the classroom still remain under an obligation not only directly to safeguard the pupils, but also to take reasonable steps to ensure that parent helpers take care of pupils' safety.

SUPERVISION OFF THE SCHOOL PREMISES

Parents may sometimes be asked to help with the transport of pupils to and from sporting fixtures. In this situation, parents and others transporting pupils have the normal duty of care to passengers.

Please ensure insurance arrangements are adequate to cover passengers. Parents transporting younger children should be careful about having them in front passenger seats where the seatbelts may not offer adequate security. In all cases children must wear seatbelts in parent's cars. If the child is below 135cm in height, they will need to use a car booster seat.

BULLYING – SCHOOL BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Bullying will not be tolerated in our school - Little Kingshill Combined School rules.

In the event of a problem please refer to the class teacher who will deal with the situation.

PRAISE

The positive aspects of praise and reward should have great emphasis. Good discipline is based on mutual knowledge and respect. Praise and encouragement should be used as much as possible. Teachers may also provide you with reward stickers.

HELPING CHILDREN WITH READING:

The guidance notes below are for parents of children learning to read. The advice it contains is useful for all parent helpers hearing children read. In the first term that your child starts school

s/he will receive a reading book to bring home. Good illustrations encourage the flow of the story and are there to be used as well as the text. Try to ask open-ended questions such as “What is happening here?” rather than “How many trees?” Reading is not just about decoding the words; it is about extracting meaning from the whole combination of words and pictures in a book.

READING SCHEME BOOKS

At a time considered appropriate by the Reception class teacher, children will start reading books from the school’s reading scheme. This is their “reading book” and has a text that is at a suitable level for him or her. The school has a variety of reading schemes and their support materials. If a child comes to the end of one reading box colour, please refer to the class teacher before choosing another book. It is important that the child’s reading record is kept up to date and the teacher is happy for the child to move to another level. The reading scheme provides the teacher with an effective means of monitoring progress.

READING RECORD

Each child is given a Reading Record. This has an important role because it is the day-to-day link between home and school. Please use it to note any pages you have heard a child read and sign.

HOW TO HELP WHEN A CHILD GETS STUCK WHEN READING

Sounding out/ Phonics.

If a word cannot be “sounded out” it is known as a “tricky word”. It is acceptable to tell the child the word and then allow them to continue reading.

USING THE FIRST LETTER SOUND

Pointing out the initial letter sound or blend is often enough to help a child identify a word.

GUESSING

Guessing or predicting is an important part of reading. Children should be encouraged to make sensible and informed “guesses”.

VISUAL CLUES

Do use the pictures where appropriate to help identify an unrecognised word. Don’t just point to the unknown word, but try talking about the picture or retelling the story so far. Look at the picture in the context of the story.

FINALLY

Please remember that there is no set time scale for learning to read. Every child is an individual and must be treated as such at all times. There will be periods of rapid progress, followed by consolidation to build confidence. Talk to children about their reading. Reassure them and praise their efforts and achievements.

Please refer to the school’s ‘Helping Your Child With Reading’ or, ‘A Guide to Reading With Older Children’ booklet for further help and advice.

Thank you.