

Voluntary Help in School

The Gattons Infant School



Date Reviewed:	Spring 2025
Date Approved:	Spring 2025 (Staffing & Pupils)
Next review due by:	Spring 2027

At The Gattons Infant School Everybody Matters



We are a Rights Respecting School
and therefore we will uphold the principles of
UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 28 Children have the right to a good quality education.

Article 29 Education should help children to use and develop their talents and abilities. It should also help them to learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

Article 31 Children have the right to play and rest.

Our Aims:

We will cultivate an environment where children are happy and secure and enjoy learning,
by:

- ensuring that everyone is treated with respect as an individual whose opinions and beliefs are valued;
- creating exciting, high quality learning environments indoors, outdoors, and in the wider community;
- involving parents/carers and children in decisions about the child's learning.



provide a broad, balanced and rich curriculum,
by:

- continuously striving for high standards of achievement through engaging, child-centred teaching;
- ensuring a wealth of meaningful learning experiences that meet the needs of each child.



inspire and challenge each child to achieve their full potential and in so doing lay the foundations for life-long learning,
by:

- developing our children's confidence and self-esteem;
- ensuring that our children are active, independent learners;
- encouraging our children to begin to take responsibility for themselves, their learning and their behaviour, therefore preparing them for life in a changing world.



"Children achieve more when schools and parents work together". (Dept .for Education and Skills)

1. Purpose of the policy

This policy reflects our belief at The Gattons in working alongside parents in school. Through the implementation of this policy we aim to ensure all parents or carers are valued for the very real help they give to the children and staff. This help means that we can offer the children a wider range of experiences while they are at school. Extra help in the classroom benefits everyone. We also hope that the parents also enjoy this worthwhile experience. We believe that volunteers provide a valuable contribution to the school's work and that they enrich the school through the breadth of their knowledge and experience.

How we use volunteers

At The Gattons, volunteers may:

- Hear children read
- Accompany school visits
- Work with individual children
- Work with small groups of children
- Support specific curriculum areas, such as ICT or art

This isn't an exhaustive list.

Volunteers may be:

- Members of the governing board
- Parents
- Former pupils
- Students on work experience
- Local residents
- Friends of the school/members of the PTA - FOGS

This is not an exhaustive list.

Members of the governing board working at the school in their capacity as governors (for instance, conducting school monitoring visits or attending meetings), are not covered by this policy. They are covered by our governor code of conduct.

2. Procedures and Safety

All people who work with children are required to complete a Disclosure and Barring check. This is entirely confidential. The school has no access to the police check, receiving only confirmation that the check has been made and whether the check has been satisfactory or not. Volunteers are appointed by the Headteacher or Deputy Head.

Intake of new volunteers can take up to 6 weeks and is dependent on the candidate and available spaces within the school. All appointments are conditional upon the completion of an enhanced DBS check (if appropriate) and other appropriate safeguarding and recruitment checks, and relevant training.

The Headteacher reserves the right to terminate a placement at any time.

- Each time a visitor comes into school they need to sign in using the electronic system in the entrance hall, and collect a sticker from the office, which we ask is worn whenever they are in school.
- Wherever someone is working they must acquaint themselves with the fire safety procedures and the position of the nearest fire exit.
- Always make sure that you are never left alone with a child in the classroom. You may however be asked to work outside the classroom with a child. Please make sure you are in full view of other adults within the school for your own safety.
- If a child becomes ill while working with someone who is helping in school, or requires first aid, send for help or take the child to the office where there are qualified first aiders. You must not carry out first aid or change a child if they have had a toileting accident.
- Please also read our Safeguarding Guidelines for Parent Helpers and Volunteers - copies can be found outside the office.
- Please ensure that you do not use your mobile phone in school.
- Please read our Behaviour Policy.

3. Confidentiality

Information about pupils, parents and staff is confidential. Volunteers are not permitted to discuss issues related to pupils, parents or staff with those outside of the organisation.

If volunteers have concerns, they should raise these with the appropriate member of staff. They shouldn't discuss them with pupils or parents.

This doesn't prevent volunteers from adhering to the school's safeguarding policy (with regard to reporting safeguarding concerns or disclosures).

If concerns relate to safeguarding, volunteers must follow the guidance in our child protection and safeguarding policy, and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

If concerns are related to whistle-blowing, volunteers must follow the guidance in our whistle-blowing policy.

4. Expectations

The school welcomes help from parents, grandparents or other carers. Their presence in the school is a matter of pride for their own children, and of course, is a great help to the school. If you are able to come regularly at the same time each week, it means the teacher is able to account for this in the planning for each day. Please try to come regularly and do tell us if you are unable to make your agreed time, so that the teacher can make alternative arrangements. Of course, we understand that some people are only able to offer occasional help in school, and this is valued as well. Please see your class teacher to offer such help, and of course, please follow our guidelines.

Parent Helpers

- The teacher will probably leave a note giving details of what is required of you. This is because they may be busy when you arrive, and unable to speak to you if they are teaching. There may be a Learning Support Assistant in the class who you will be able to approach. You will soon get used to the classroom, and know the type of jobs that are needed. Sharpening pencils is something that always can be done if there are any spare moments!
- You may be asked to work with a group of children. Details of the activity will be given to you, and should outline what to expect the children to achieve. Please help them to do the work themselves, by talking to them, asking questions and encouraging them to concentrate and do their best.
- If the work is too hard, do not be tempted to do it for them! Just let them do their best, and note down for the teacher any details of what they found hard.
- You may be asked to help prepare materials for lessons, perhaps cutting things out, laminating or photocopying. Please ask the class LSA if you need help with this initially. The staff in the office are

always able to give advice. If you are asked to photocopy, please use the photocopier in the staffroom rather than the office to minimise the disruption to the office.

Reading Volunteers

Hearing children read is essential to reading development. Besides practising the reading skills they are developing, it provides an opportunity for the child to enjoy the uninterrupted time and attention of an adult.

- Take a few moments to get to know the child, and put them at their ease. Start by looking at the cover of the book, ask them what they think it may be about, and read the title to them if they cannot read it themselves.
- Take every opportunity to build up the child's confidence. If they are struggling, read the book alongside them, but let your voice trail off when they are reading on their own. If they really find the book a challenge, then you could read the book to them first. Make a note and check with the teacher later that the child has chosen a book of the correct level.
- The teacher will give you a list of the children to hear read. Please make any comments that you feel the teacher needs to know in the reading diary.
- Encourage the children to use different strategies for working out words - picture clues, the first sound (phoneme), sounding out the word, or thinking about a word that makes sense.
- Do not let them struggle too much over one word, or they will lose the sense of what they are reading, and could become discouraged.
- Talk about the book. Chat to them about what is happening, and what might happen next. This will help them to understand the story, as well as keep them interested!
- If the child makes a mistake do not jump in immediately with the right word. Wait until an appropriate moment, such as the end of a sentence or the end of a page, and then talk to them about whether it makes sense. Encourage them to self-correct, although you may need to read the sentence to them if they are unsure.
- If the child is unable to read a word, try the following strategies:
 - a. Suggest reading to the end of the sentence, and coming back to the unknown word.
 - b. Suggest working out the initial sound, and tell them if they do not know what it is.
 - c. Look at the picture.
 - d. Re-read part of the sentence to the child, and help them to work out the word from the context.
 - e. If none of these work, tell them the word and re-read the sentence.
- As you are reading with the child, ask questions, such as,
 - "What do you think will happen next?"
 - "Why did.....happen?"
 - "What do you think will do?"At the end you may ask if the child has enjoyed the book and why.

Please read the reading volunteer guidelines leaflet with suggested comments to record in a child's reading diary.

5. Behaviour

Copies of our Behaviour Policy are available for you to read, and are kept in the office.

- Please praise the children for the effort they make. We have a culture in our school of valuing all individuals, and firmly believe that children learn best when they are confident and secure.
- Expect good behaviour from all the children. We expect them to be polite to you and to each other. If you have any problems, please speak to the teacher.

6. Refreshments

Tea and coffee is provided free of charge, in the staffroom. Please take breaks during assembly times or after teacher break times rather than during teachers breaks.

7. Handwriting

As a school we have adopted a cursive style of handwriting in KS1. This encourages children to join their handwriting when they are able to. It is most important that the child is encouraged to adopt an appropriate pencil grip to aid clear letter formation and encourage the flow of handwriting. The child's posture is important to the process of writing, they must be facing the table, and with both their feet placed on the floor.

8. Privacy Notice

Our privacy notice for volunteers explains what information we collect about volunteers and why we collect it. We will retain records relating to volunteers in line with our records retention schedule.

Please follow the link below to read our Privacy Notice for Volunteers.

[Privacy Notice for Volunteers](#)

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly, and amended where appropriate. We welcome comments from parents, and if you have any suggestions to help with the role of parents and carers in school, we would like to hear them.

Above all, if an adult working in school has any problems while in school please see the Deputy or the Headteacher to discuss them.

Appendix 1: volunteer application form

Complete the application form in full.

Please note that the school may not be able to accommodate all preferences.

Data protection notice

Throughout this form, we ask for some personal data about you. We'll only use this data in line with data protection legislation and process your data for one or more of the following reasons permitted in law:

- You've given us your consent
- We must process it to comply with our legal obligations

[You'll find more information on how we use your personal data in our privacy notice for volunteers.]

[Privacy Notice for Volunteers](#)

Personal details

Name:	
Date of birth:	
Gender:	
Telephone number:	
Email address:	
Home address:	

Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information

The Gattons Infant School is legally obligated to process an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check before making appointments to relevant posts.

The enhanced DBS check will reveal both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings, and any other information held by local police that's considered relevant to the role. Any information that is "protected" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 will not appear on a DBS certificate.

Volunteers working in regulated activity will also require a barred list check.

Any data processed as part of the DBS check will be processed in accordance with data protection regulations and our privacy notice.

Do you have a DBS check? (please circle)	Yes/ No
If yes, what type of check do you have? (please circle)	Enhanced DBS / Enhanced DBS with barred list information
Date of check:	
Certificate number:	

Availability

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM					
PM					
Before school					
After school					
Lunchtimes					

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Do you have any relevant qualifications?

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Preferences	
What age would you prefer to work with?	
Would you prefer to work one-on-one or with a small group?	

References	
Your placement as a volunteer may be subject to satisfactory references. Please give the details of two referees who can comment on your suitability (e.g. employers, colleagues, teachers, etc).	
Name:	Name:
Relationship to you:	Relationship to you:
Address:	Address:
Telephone number:	Telephone number:

Email address:

Email address:

Disability and accessibility

The Gattons Infant School is committed to ensuring that applicants with disabilities or impairments receive equal opportunities and treatment.

If you have a disability or impairment, and would like us to make adjustments or arrangements to assist you, please state the arrangements you require: