



# Carniny Primary School

## Policy for Volunteers in School



### Rationale

When children are enrolled in Carniny Primary School, teachers and parents become partners in their care and education. Through complementary roles, mutual support and open communication the bond between home, community and school can greatly enrich a child's general progress and experience of the school. In addition to providing on-going assistance with homework, uniform etc parents and friends are encouraged to become actively involved in the life of the school in many ways, for example as librarians, as members of FOCPS or as helpers on educational visits. It is our hope that such involvement is as enjoyable for the volunteers as it is useful to the children and staff. Without wishing to dissuade or offend those who are enthusiastic and generous with their commitment to school it is important that we follow procedures that will give confidence to children, parents and staff and to the volunteers themselves.

This policy has been written to comply with Department of Education (DENI) Circular 2017/04, DENI Circular 2008/03 "The unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school".

Carniny Primary School uses DENI's definition that "a volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory completion of the procedures set out below either

- Assumes unpaid duties in a school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or is
- Engaged by the school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips; summer activity schemes or residential activities; or to undertake coaching in sports activities"

### Recruitment of Volunteers

There are many opportunities for people to become involved with school and individuals may wish to be generally available, or to offer their assistance with a particular age group or task. Some children are not ready to have their parents assisting the teacher in their own classroom as it may be difficult to adjust to a different relationship. In these cases it is better for the parent to volunteer to work in another area of the school.

All volunteers follow the same procedures and a list is held in school of those people who:

- Have applied to be volunteers
- Have completed the necessary paperwork
- Have been vetted by DENI, Education Authority and Access NI criminal records procedures

People are encouraged to volunteer at any time and application forms are readily available from the office through contacting any member of staff. Parents or friends of the school may be asked to help when a particular need arises but an appeal for volunteers is made annually to allow time for clearance by the Education Authority.

## **Induction**

Following clearance the volunteer will be asked to come to school for an Induction meeting with the principal. This meeting will give an opportunity for the volunteer to ask any questions and for the school to familiarise the volunteer with key school policies relating to their role such as:

Safeguarding and Child Protection  
Confidentiality  
Health and Safety  
Behaviour Management  
Code of Conduct

The meeting will also provide an opportunity for both the volunteer and the school to agree the start date and frequency of the support being offered and to sign the Volunteer Agreement.

As part of the schools' safeguarding procedures all volunteers are requested to sign the visitor's book at the main entrance and wear the visitors' lanyard.

Parents volunteering to accompany on school visits may do so without a disclosure and will be reminded not to put themselves in any compromising situation and will not work on a one to one basis.

## **Code of Conduct**

While helping in school, volunteers are entitled to be treated with the respect and in a manner appropriate to a member of staff. Children are told to refer to volunteers as Mr, Ms or Mrs rather than by first names. To this end volunteers will be issued with badges that identify them as volunteers at Carniny Primary School.

As semi-professionals volunteers at Carniny Primary School are expected to:

- Demonstrate their support for education and give their full attention to the task in hand. For this reason volunteers should not bring children with them to school unless as part of the group with which they are working. Parents who volunteer outside school hours may at times find it necessary to bring siblings to school. At these times those children must be under the parents' direct supervision. The parents are responsible for their own children's safety and must keep the children with them at all times.
- Treat what they see and hear in school as confidential. Working with other peoples' children is a privilege with responsibilities. Children observed in the classroom or the school should not be discussed outside, even with that child's parents. Questions relating to individual children should be addressed to the child's teacher or principal. Volunteers would not normally have access to children's records. An exception might be relevant medical information.
- Arrive on time and be ready to start the agreed task. Carniny relies on volunteers to support much that is important in the life of the school and its children. It is important that volunteers are available for the duration of the task. If they must cancel, the volunteer is asked to call the office as soon as possible to allow time for a replacement to be found.

- Leave all matters of discipline to the teacher with responsibility. Volunteers may address behaviour or safety issues if the teacher is temporarily unavailable. The volunteer should inform the teacher as soon as possible.
- Accept direction and supervision. Volunteers are not intended to take the place of staff but to provide assistance and enrichment. They should be consistent with the teacher in supporting the school's ethos and behaviour. Volunteers should therefore agree to operate under the direction of Carniny staff.
- Clearly communicate interests and expectations.
- Present a positive role model. Volunteers should be patient, flexible, appreciative, respectful and considerate particularly in their dealings with children.
- Adhere to the school's Health and Safety Policy.
- Adhere to the school's Pastoral Care and Child Protection Policies.
- Adhere to the school's Safe Handling and Reasonable Force Policy.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate for professional working in a primary school.
- Refrain from inappropriate language or topics of conversation.
- Adhere to the school's smoking policy.
- Switch off mobile phones inside the school building or any venue for an educational visit (arrangements can be made to deal with any essential call/s)

### **Volunteers' Rights**

School Volunteers have the right to:

- Be recognised for their invaluable contributions to the educational experience of our children.
- Be assigned worthwhile tasks.
- Access any school policies and procedures that are relevant to their roles.
- Any training or supervision that is necessary for the success of their activities.
- Deal with any complaint through the school's formal general complaints procedure.

### **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually.



## Carniny Primary School – Volunteer Application Form



Surname and Title:	Forename:
Previous Names:	DOB:
Home Tel No:	Mobile:
Email address:	
Relevant skills, training qualifications or job history if applicable:	
Medical History disclosure: Eg back complaint/epilepsy etc	
Please indicate what kind of work you are volunteering for?	
Other information in support of this application:	
Please give the name and contact details of a referee who has known you for at least 2 years. This should be someone who knows you in a professional capacity, not a friend or relative.	
Referee's Name:	
Referee's Address:	
Position:	
Telephone Number:	
Email address:	
The Board of Governors is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.	
The school requires all volunteers working on a regular basis to complete an application form for an Enhanced Records Disclosure	
Signature:	Date:



## Carniny Primary School – Volunteer Agreement



This document sets out the agreement between the named person and the school for voluntary work. This agreement is not intended to be a legally binding contract between us and may be cancelled at any time at the discretion of either party. Neither of us intends any employment relationship to be created either now or at any time in the future.

The process of arranging a clearance and induction process for volunteers takes time and cost to school staff and we would therefore request that your commitment to the school is for a minimum of 5 sessions.

Name of Volunteer:	
Agreed Start Date	
Frequency/duration, general area(s) of work:	
School Link Person:	
Signed:	(Principal) Date:
Signed:	(Volunteer) Date: