

# **Castle Tower School**

## **Volunteer Policy**

**Date: March 2018  
To be reviewed: March 2019**

# Castle Tower School








## Volunteer Policy

### Introduction

Castle Tower School is a Controlled Special School by the Education Authority. It caters for pupils with learning difficulties between the ages 3 of and 19. All pupils follow the Northern Ireland curriculum at an appropriate level.

At Castle Tower School we recognise the importance of volunteers in assisting the staff and pupils within the school. Volunteers bring with them a variety of skills and expertise which will enhance the educational experience for the pupils of Castle Tower. A volunteer in Castle Tower School is someone who wishes to provide assistance to the school during their spare time.

Our volunteers include:








-  Members of the Board of Governors
-  Parents of Pupils
-  Ex-pupils
-  Ex-members of staff
-  University students
-  Members of the local community
-  Members of the Parents and Friends Association

Any person wishing to volunteer in Castle Tower School as part of a placement through their school or college course will be catered for as part of the Student Policy and should contact the appropriate teacher in charge of students. The teacher is Mrs Elizabeth Corsby.

### Role of the Volunteer

The volunteer will support the day-to-day running to the class in which they are placed and will take direction from the staff within the classroom.

The types of activities volunteers may be asked to assist with are:

-  Setting up classroom activities
-  Assisting pupils in carrying out their work
-  Hearing pupils read
-  Working with small groups of pupils
-  Working alongside an individual pupil
-  Undertaking art and craft activities with the pupils
-  Accompanying school trips/visits

## **Becoming a Volunteer**

Anyone wishing to become a volunteer within Castle Tower School should contact the school and make an appointment to meet the teacher-in-charge of volunteers which is Mrs E Corsby. During this meeting the volunteer will complete the Volunteer Application Form in Appendix 1 and will also complete the Access NI forms at this time. The member of staff will take you through the Volunteer Policy and will provide you with the Volunteer Information Sheet.

The Volunteer Application Form asks for contact details, the classes and lessons you are interested in helping with, the times you are available to come into school and the frequency of these visits and also details of any previous Access NI checks which you may hold (a copy of this will be taken).

This application form and accompanying details will be presented to the school management team to be considered. The teacher-in-charge will contact the volunteer regarding their application. Castle Tower School reserve the right to decline the offer of support from a volunteer or terminate their position.

All information taken during this process will be stored in the school office for details to remain secure.

## **Access NI**

Access NI checks must be undertaken by all volunteers coming into Castle Tower School. A sample of the application form can be found in Appendix 2 of this policy. The following information is provided in *appendix 9* of the *Child Protection Policy of Castle Tower School*.

Access NI checks will be completed and relevant documentation will be signed by the Head of Campus. Access NI checks cost £30 for an enhanced check. This payment will be covered by the school.

## **Vetting Procedures**

We take into account the Department of Education, Safeguarding and Child Protection-A Guide for Schools, Circular 2017/04, Section 4.5 in relation to volunteers in school and Department of Education Circular 2008/03 – Criminal Background checking staff in school – Programme to extend coverage.

All permanent staff in school and newly appointed permanent members of staff are vetted by the Human Resources Department of the Education Authority.

All volunteers, sports, clubs and other activities (including students) are vetted by school using the appropriate forms (copies included). For further information refer to the Child Protection: Circular 2012/19 changes to pre-employment vetting checks for volunteers working in schools.

## **Supervision**

All volunteers work under the supervision of the class teacher and staff in the room. Teachers retain responsibility for the pupils at all times, including the pupils behaviour and the activity they are undertaking. Volunteers should follow teacher/staff guidance as to how to carry out an activity, what the expected outcome of the activity is. Volunteers are encouraged to seek further advice/guidance from the teacher/staff in the event of a query/problem regarding the pupils understand of a task or behaviour.

## **Health and Safety**

Volunteers should exercise due care and attention during their time in school. If a volunteer becomes aware of any hazards or concerns they should report this to the class teacher/staff. During the event of an emergency or class disruption, volunteers must follow directions as given by the staff in the room.

## **Complaints Procedure**

Any complaints made about a volunteer can be referred to the teacher-in-charge of volunteers or the Principal.

Any complaints or concerns made by a volunteer can be referred to the teacher-in-charge of volunteers or the Principal.

A complaint form, as show in Appendix 3, will be completed and considered by the school management and leadership. The appropriate course of action will be taken through the school management and leadership teams.

## **Confidentiality**

Volunteers should maintain confidentiality at all times regarding the pupils they work with. If a volunteer has any concerns regarding pupils or activities they are involved with, this should be addressed with the class teacher, the teacher-in-charge of volunteers or the principal. Volunteers must not discuss sensitive information with parents of pupils attending the school.

## **Code of Conduct**

The following Code of Conduct is taken from *Appendix 15 of the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy of Castle Tower School* and has been adapted for this Volunteer Policy. This Code of Conduct is adhered to by all staff and volunteers within the school.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

In school we are in daily contact with pupils, as well as colleagues, parents, visitors and other professionals. It is incumbent on us to behave in a professional manner at all times. This Code of Conduct is intended for use by everyone who works in a salaried or voluntary capacity.

### **Timekeeping**

We should endeavour to keep to the times we have volunteered to work. Should a delay in arriving at work be inevitable, we should contact school.

### **Appointments**

Where possible personal/medical appointments should be made out of school hours. If a volunteer is attending an appointment during times which they have dedicated to the school, please inform the teacher-in-charge and the class teacher.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones should be switched off during lessons. Volunteers using their mobile phones during non-contact time should be aware of and respect others.

### **Absences**

If a member of volunteer knows that they are going to be off because of illness they should inform the staff in the school office or the teacher-in-charge of volunteers (in this case Mrs E Corsby). This information will then be passed to the relevant teachers. If possible inform the afternoon before the absence.

### **Appearance**

We should dress appropriately at all times. We expect our pupils to wear their uniform and we should equally dress neatly, modestly and appropriately.

### **Dealing with Pupils**

We should always take into account the age, level of understanding and circumstances of each pupil when we deal with them. At all times we must maintain **FAIRNESS AND CONSISTENCY**. The teacher/staff in the classroom will guide you when working with the pupils. We must always be aware of Child Protection and ensure that:-

- We are not alone with one pupil in a closed room;
- We never touch a pupil inappropriately or in a manner which could be misconstrued;

- We never promise confidentiality;
- We never say anything to a pupil which could be misinterpreted;
- We speak to a member of staff regarding any conversation which may concern you.

If you have any concerns about a pupil please speak to the teacher, the teacher-in-charge of volunteers or ask to speak to Mrs R McCaughan (Designated Teacher for Child Protection).

*IN ALL MATTERS PERTAINING TO DEALING WITH OUR PUPILS WE USE PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT AND COMMON SENSE.*

#### Dealing with Parents

We consider parents as partners and value their contribution to the school. Parents are expected to make appointments to see members of staff although there may be occasions when this is not possible.

**NB** – Volunteers must direct any parents wishing to talk about their child to a member of staff within the school at all times.

#### Dealing with Colleagues

We work with colleagues at different levels every day. In all our dealings with them we should have regard for their position in the school, their professional judgement and their teaching and other duties. We should attempt to keep disruption to normal work to a minimum.

#### Dealing with Visitors and Other Professionals

Visitors to school including other professionals are expected to sign the visitor's book on arrival and wear a visitor's badge. The office staff will normally ensure that the member of staff expecting a visitor is informed. However, should we see an obvious visitor in school we should speak to them and ask if we can help.

Volunteers must sign in each day using the electronic sign in system and wear photographic label provided.

***IN ALL MATTERS, THE PUPILS ARE AT THE CORE OF WHAT WE DO IN SCHOOL.***

***THEIR EDUCATION AND WELFARE IS OUR RESPONSIBILITY WHILE THEY ARE AT SCHOOL OR IN OUR CARE.***

***CONFIDENTIALITY IS PARAMOUNT AT ALL TIMES.***

**Appendix 1 – Volunteer Application Form**

Volunteer Name .....

Date of Birth .....

Contact Address .....

.....

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Contact Numbers (Home) ..... (Mobile)

Email Address

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Access NI details - .....

Date of Application - .....

**Emergency Contact Details**

Name - .....

Relationship - .....

Contact Details - .....

**School Links**

Do you have links with any staff or pupils which are employed by or attend Castle Tower School?

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**Further Information**

Details of medical conditions/disabilities which the school need to be made aware of or take into consideration for your placement

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Why have you decided to become a volunteer at Castle Tower School?

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Which classes would you be interested in working with? Please tick as appropriate

Nursery                       Foundation                       Key Stage 1/2   
Key Stage 3/4                       Post 16   
Availability: Monday  Tuesday  Wednesday  Thursday  Friday   
Times: All day  Morning (9am to 12noon)  Afternoon (12noon to 3pm)

Other, please state .....

Any special skills or interests which you feel may be beneficial to your placement in school.

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Any further comments

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I understand all the details given in the volunteer policy and information booklet and agree to follow the Code of Conduct and guidelines provided.

Name .....

Signed .....

Date .....

## **Appendix 2 – Access NI sample**

The access NI forms can be found at the following address - <http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/index/information-and-services/employment/employment-terms-and-conditions/starting-a-new-job/accessni-criminal-record-checks/accessni-application-forms.htm>

**Appendix 3 – Complaints Form for Volunteers**

This form can be used by both volunteers and staff within Castle Tower School. This form should be given to the teacher-in-charge of volunteers, head of campus or the Principal.

Your Name .....

Date .....

Nature of complaint .....

Details of the complaint

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Signed.....

Date.....

Received .....

Date .....

**Action Required/taken**

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