

St. Peter's Primary School



School Policy Document

Use of Volunteers & Vetting Policy

It is the policy of our school that all adults who come into contact with pupils either in a paid or voluntary capacity are safe and suitable persons to work with children. Background checks are carried out by CCMS through Access NI.

Pre-Employment Vetting

All new paid teaching and non-teaching staff, being appointed to posts in St. Peter's school, must undergo a pre-employment vetting check before taking up their post.

Previous Employment in the Education Sector

Due to the unique features of the education sector (where staff move between schools, the academic year and its vacation periods) we may be in a position where we recruit a paid member of staff who has previously worked at another school until the end of the preceding term. In such circumstances we will seek advice from the CCMS as to the vetting requirements for those individuals.

Depending on an individual's circumstances and employment history a new vetting check may not be required for paid teaching and non-teaching staff, if their previous employment history within the education sector can be verified, their break in employment in the education sector is no longer than three months and it can be confirmed that a vetting check was in place before they finished working at their previous school.

The safeguarding of pupils is paramount and if we are in any doubt about whether to vet a new member of paid staff, we should always err on the side of caution and obtain a new EDC.

Substitute Teachers

Teachers employed from the Northern Ireland Substitute Teachers Register (NISTR) are normally vetted every 2 years as part of their registration with NISTR. By engaging the services of substitute teachers from the NISTR, we therefore expect that they have been appropriately vetted by virtue of being on the Register.

Teachers

St Peter's only employs permanent and temporary staff who are registered with the General Teaching Council or who are on the Northern Ireland Substitute Register in accordance with Circular Number 2006/07.

Emergency Cover for Non-Teaching Staff

In addition, situations will arise unexpectedly, where non-teaching staff are required to cover for permanent staff in the case of an emergency. It may be necessary that, in these circumstances, temporary arrangements have to be quickly put in place for such staff before a vetting check can be carried out. In situations where it is not possible to obtain a vetting check in advance, the Designated teacher for Child Protection will carry out a risk assessment and in such circumstances all necessary steps will be taken to ensure the safeguarding of our children.

Coaches

Sporting organisations such as the Irish Football Association, Gaelic Athletic Association and Irish Rugby Football Union often provide coaches to work in our school. We use appropriately vetted sports coaches in line with E.A / CCMS guidelines and procedures.

Our music tutors / sports' coaches / support staff who regularly work in our school unsupervised are all vetted. We retain a record of all such staff including copies of their clearance documents.

Visitors to the School

All visitors to our school will be expected to sign in on arrival and sign out when leaving. They will be supervised at all times when around children.

Visitors to schools to attend meetings or events such as parents or to deliver goods or carry out maintenance tasks do not routinely need to be vetted before being allowed onto school premises. However, such visitors will be managed by school staff and their access to areas and movement within the school restricted as needs require. They will be (as required):

- Met/directed by school staff/representatives;
- Signed in and out of the school by school staff;
- If appropriate, be given restricted access to only specific areas of the school;
- Where possible, they will be escorted around the school by a member of staff;
- If delivering goods or carrying out building, maintenance or repair tasks, their work area will be cordoned off from pupils for health and safety reasons.

Services provided by the Education Authority:

- Education Welfare Officers who work in schools are vetted by the E.A.;
- Peripatetic Teachers who work in schools are vetted by E.A.;
- Education Psychologists who work in schools are vetted by E.A.;
- Music Tutors who work in schools are vetted by E.A.

Transport - Private arrangements made by Schools.

Only bus/private coach firms and their named and vetted drivers, provide transport services to our school.

Transport services provided by the Education Authority

The Education Authority vets drivers and assistants providing transport for pupils to schools.

Exceptions

In some cases, there will be no requirement for adults who work or volunteer in our school to be vetted. This applies to people who do not carry out regular activity in school (more than 3 times per month) and are not unsupervised. This category most commonly refers to:

1. Parent volunteers who may be giving a one off talk or assisting with a school trip.
2. Visitors to school who are leading workshops or providing entertainment e.g. writers, artists, dog warden etc.

Safeguarding and Child Protection Training

All staff receive Safeguarding and Child Protection training each year.

All temporary staff are inducted by the Designated Teacher for Child Protection – D. Lavery and are briefed on the key aspects of our pastoral framework -Child Protection, Health and Safety and Anti-Bullying, Positive Behaviour etc.

School governors receive training through the Education Authority Training Programmes which governors avail of when delivered.

Recording of Vetting Checks

The Department of Education recommends that for each member of staff, schools should keep a note of:

- The date an EDC application is sent to the Education Authority for processing;
- The date the EDC is received from AccessNI;
- The EDC reference number,

In the event of the school being asked for evidence that a member of staff has been appropriately vetted, the school will use the record of the date and EDC reference number to confirm when a vetting check was obtained.

Other Safeguarding Measures

While pre-employment vetting is of critical importance, it is only one of a number of measures that our school uses to help safeguard pupils in our care. Advice, guidance and training about appropriate behaviour, escorts around schools, clear identification of visitors in schools, a named person to report concerns or incidents to and observable working areas, where possible, all contribute to making safer working environments for both pupils, staff and visitors.

Advice

The Child Protection Support Service (CPSS) is available to offer the Principal advice about child protection concerns, while Education Authority H.R. departments can advise about vetting requirements, procedures and issues.

The Selection and Use of Volunteers to Support School Activities

Volunteers have an important and beneficial role in supporting the work of our teachers and other paid staff in our school and in contributing, by their efforts and initiative, to the life of the school. However, it is also essential that appropriate steps are taken, through screening and selection arrangements, to ensure that children are not placed at risk through allowing the unsupervised and unmanaged access of unsuitable adults to the school.

The following guidance recommends procedures which our school has put in place to ensure not only that maximum benefit is obtained from the contribution which volunteers can offer but also that unsuitable people are prevented from working with children.

In St. Peter's, a volunteer is an individual who, subject to the satisfactory completion of the procedures set out below, either:

- (i) assumes unpaid duties in our school on a regular basis on more than two occasions or;
- (ii) is engaged by our school to accompany or assist in school visits or trips;
- (iii) undertakes coaching in sports activities.

Formal arrangements as to selection and vetting should not be required for volunteers who are involved outside school hours and who do not have unsupervised contact with pupils. These would include parents involved in fund-raising events and using the school premises for meetings; parents and others carrying out self-help projects for the school; parents supervising at school functions where school staff are also present.

If a volunteer works in our school unsupervised in a "Regulated Activity" - see list below, then they will be vetted through an EDC from Access NI.

"Regulated Activity" List

- Teaching;
- Training;
- Instructing;
- Caring for or supervising children;
- Providing advice/guidance on wellbeing;
- Driving a vehicle only for children.

If a volunteer is reasonably supervised (regular & day to day) then we will not need an EDC. However, they will be asked to provide the following information:

- Personal details – Name, Address, Date of Birth, Any relationship with the school e.g. parent, relative of member of staff etc.
- Details of any qualifications, previous work with children
- The name of a referee who is not a family member

If in doubt, we will get an EDC. We will fund the cost for volunteers.

Paid Staff

All newly appointed paid staff (Teaching, Non-Teaching, Office, Catering, Cleaning & Caretaking) will be vetted – ref: 2013/19 Safe Guarding Circular Pack.

The Use of Volunteers

Volunteers will not be placed in a position of sole responsibility for the security of children, premises or equipment unless suitably vetted through Access NI;

Volunteers will be briefed on:

The policy of the school and the management authority in relation to pastoral care, including:

The Positive Behaviour Policy and the extent of the volunteer's authority within it;

The Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures;

The Health and Safety Policy.

Volunteers will understand the tasks which they are to undertake and receive appropriate training to enable them to perform these;

Volunteers will only be allocated duties after consultation and agreement with the teacher or other member of staff with whom the volunteer will be most closely involved. Teachers will not be placed under any pressure to accept volunteers in their classroom;

Volunteers will not be afforded access to records or other information relating to staff or pupils. An exception might be made where a child has a medical or other condition of which all those working with him/her should be made aware, and where the agreement of the parent has been sought.

Health and Safety and Insurance

Volunteers are owed a duty of care under the requirements of Health and Safety legislation. We will ensure that volunteers are treated no less favourably than paid employees in terms of the schools' obligations under the legislation. The schools will therefore seek advice from the Education Authority / CCMS as appropriate, on the health and safety, and insurance, implications of engaging volunteers.

The school will:

Require the volunteer to register at the beginning of each visit;

Provide the volunteer with a readily identifiable name pass giving his/her name and status;

The school will ensure that badges or passes are surrendered at the end of each day and when the volunteers' involvement with the school comes to an end.

Accepted – March 2018

Review – Date – March 2020

Annex 1

Confidential

Volunteer Reference Form: St Peter's Primary School

_____ has expressed an interest in becoming a volunteer, and has given your name as a referee. If you are happy to complete this reference, all the information contained on the form will remain absolutely confidential, and will only be shared with the applicant's immediate supervisor should he/she be offered a volunteer position. We would appreciate your being extremely candid in your evaluation of this person.

1. How long have you known this person?

2. In what capacity?

3. What attributes does this person have that would make him/her a suitable volunteer?

4. How would you describe his/her personality?

5. Please rate this person on the following qualities (please tick one box on each line):

Qualities	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Responsibility					
Maturity					
Self-Motivation					
Can Motivate Other					
Commitment					
Energy					
Trustworthiness					
Reliability					

This post involves substantial access to children. As a school, which is committed to the welfare and protection of children, we are anxious to know if you have any reason at all to be concerned about this applicant being in contact with children or young people.

Yes

No (Please Circle)

If you have circle YES (meaning you have some concerns) we will contact you in confidence.

Please print your name: _____

Please sign: _____ Date: _____

Annex 2

Confidential

Volunteer Application Form: St. Peter's Primary School

Name: _____

Address: _____

Previous names (where applicable): _____

Date of Birth _____

Telephone (Home): _____ Mobile: _____

Current Occupation _____

Relationship with School _____ (e.g. parent, former pupil, friend/relative of member of staff.)

Relevant qualifications for role:

Key Questions:

Q1. Have you previously been involved in voluntary work involving children and young people? Yes/No (please circle) If yes, please give details below.

Q2. Do You Have: A current driving licence? Yes/No (please circle) Do you have the use of a car? Yes/No (please circle).

Q3. What days and times are you available to volunteer?

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Occasional
Times						

Q4. Do you have any disabilities which would affect the type of voluntary work you could undertake? Yes/No (please circle). If yes, please give details below.

Referees

Please give the names and addresses of two referees who may be approached to support your application for voluntary activities. Referees should not be family members or members of the staff of the school.

Name:	Name:
Relationship to Volunteer e.g. minister, employer or bank manager.	Relationship to Volunteer:
Address:	Address:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:

Please include any other information that would support your application as a volunteer in St. Peter's Primary School.

CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECKS Voluntary activities in the school may involve substantial contact with children and it may therefore be necessary to arrange for a Criminal Records Check to be carried out on certain applicants, depending on the activities they will undertake. Please sign the declaration below, indicating whether you are willing for such a check to be carried out on you.

DECLARATION The information above is correct. I have declared any criminal convictions as listed above.

I give/I do not (please circle) give my permission for a Criminal Records check to be made should this be considered necessary.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____