TRIMLEY ST. MARTIN

Volunteer Helpers' Handbook

A Guide to Helping Children in School

Thank you for becoming a volunteer helper in our school.

We all appreciate the help given by volunteers and we hope this booklet will help you while you are in school.

Trimley St Martin Primary School

September 2026

Welcome to Trimley St Martin Primary School

We greatly appreciate the time, enthusiasm and commitment that volunteers give to our school. Volunteer support helps us provide a richer range of experiences for children and supports staff in many aspects of school life.

This handbook explains the practical arrangements and safeguarding expectations for volunteers. It should be read alongside the school's current policies, particularly the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and the Volunteer Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct.

Our arrangements are reviewed in light of current statutory guidance. This edition reflects the position in September 2026, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, changes to regulated activity and DBS requirements from 1 September 2026, the new statutory allergy safety arrangements, and current guidance relating to the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law).

1. General Information

Signing in and out – Please sign in and out at the main office when you arrive and leave. We use the digital sign-in system on the iPad at the office hatch. Wear the identification/lanyard provided while on site.

Volunteer Behaviour Policy – You will be given the Volunteer Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct. Please read, sign and follow it throughout your volunteering.

Safeguarding – Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. If something concerns you, report it immediately to the class teacher, DSL or Deputy DSL. Do not assume someone else will report it.

Valuables – Where possible, avoid bringing valuables into school. If you do bring them, keep them with you or follow the school's arrangements for secure storage.

Dress – Please dress smartly but comfortably and in a way that models appropriate standards for children. Clothing should be suitable for the activities you are supporting.

Refreshments – Tea and coffee facilities are available in the staffroom. Please respect staff break times and keep shared areas tidy.

Confidentiality – Do not discuss individual children, families, staff or incidents with parents, carers, other volunteers or members of the community. If you have a concern, speak to the class teacher, DSL or Headteacher.

2. Safeguarding and Child Protection

All adults who work with children have a responsibility to help keep children safe. The school follows Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and its own safeguarding procedures. KCSIE 2026 is the current statutory guidance for schools in England from 1 September 2026.

- Maintain a child-centred approach and always consider what is best for the child.
- Report any concern about a child's welfare or safety immediately.
- Report concerns about the behaviour of an adult, including a volunteer, staff member or visitor.
- Report concerns about your own behaviour or any situation where you think a professional boundary may have become unclear.

- Do not investigate a concern yourself or promise a child confidentiality.
- If a child tells you something that may indicate they need help or protection, listen calmly, avoid leading questions and pass the information to the DSL or Deputy DSL immediately.
- Do not take photographs or videos of children on personal devices.
- Do not contact pupils through personal social media, messaging, email, gaming platforms or other private channels.

Designated Safeguarding Leads

Senior Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Mrs Samantha Ross

Deputy DSLs: Mrs Joanna Matthews, Ms Rowe and Mrs Thornton

Safeguarding Governor: Mrs Alicia Mann

Low-level concerns and positions of trust

Volunteers are in a position of trust. A concern does not have to involve an obvious safeguarding incident before it is reported. If something feels inappropriate, overfamiliar, unusual or makes you uneasy, tell the class teacher, DSL or Headteacher. Examples include inappropriate humour, unnecessary physical contact, favouritism, private communication with pupils, gifts or blurred boundaries.

The school will manage concerns and allegations in accordance with its safeguarding procedures and KCSIE 2026.

3. DBS and Safer Recruitment – Important 2026 Update

The law changed on 1 September 2026. The previous supervision exemption for certain volunteer activities was removed. This means that some activities which are carried out frequently or meet the relevant period condition can now be regulated activity even when the volunteer is supervised by a member of staff.

- Volunteers undertaking regulated activity with children must have an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
- The relevant period condition includes activity on more than 3 days in a 30-day period or overnight activity.
- Volunteers on overnight school trips are in regulated activity and require the appropriate enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information.
- Occasional parents/carers helping at events or a school day trip are not automatically in regulated activity; the school will determine what check, if any, is appropriate.
- The school will assess the nature, frequency and circumstances of each volunteer role and will confirm the required checks before the role begins.

Volunteers must not begin an arrangement requiring a particular DBS check until the school has confirmed that the required safer recruitment checks have been completed.

4. Health and Safety / Emergency Procedures

- All helpers share responsibility for reporting hazards or unsafe situations.
- Report accidents, injuries and near misses involving children immediately to a member of staff so they can be dealt with and recorded appropriately.
- If something is broken or not working properly, tell a member of staff immediately.
- Follow the fire evacuation route shown in the classroom and go to the playground assembly point.
- If you are elsewhere in the school, leave by the nearest safe exit and go to the assembly point.

- Follow staff instructions during fire, lockdown, evacuation or any other emergency.
- Do not attempt to manage a serious emergency independently; alert school staff and follow the agreed emergency procedure.

5. Allergy Safety and Medical Needs

From 2026, schools have new statutory allergy safety duties under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 and related Department for Education statutory guidance. These arrangements are sometimes referred to as "Benedict's Law", but the statutory duties arise from the legislation and regulations/guidance rather than a law formally titled Benedict's Law.

- Take all information about a child's allergy seriously.
- Follow the school's Allergy Safety Policy and relevant Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs).
- Do not give food or drink to a child unless this is authorised and appropriate.
- Never share food with pupils.
- Do not bring food into school for pupils unless this is permitted under school arrangements.
- Report any suspected allergic reaction, accidental exposure or near miss immediately.
- Follow staff instructions during a medical emergency.

The school has arrangements for allergy awareness, Individual Healthcare Plans and emergency medication. Volunteers should not administer medication unless specifically authorised and appropriately trained under the school's medical procedures.

6. Equality, Respect and Relationships

Our aim is to build children's self-esteem, confidence and self-discipline through praise, encouragement and positive relationships.

- Treat every pupil with dignity, fairness and respect.
- Do not discriminate, stereotype or use prejudicial language.
- Respect differences including disability, SEND, race, culture, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and other protected characteristics.
- Adapt your communication and support to individual children's needs.
- Do not make assumptions about a child's diagnosis, family circumstances or behaviour.

7. Working with Children in the Classroom

- Always check with the teacher what your role is, what you should do and what resources you will need.
- The teacher remains responsible for the teaching, learning and behaviour of the class and will provide direction and support.
- If you are unsure about anything, stop and ask the teacher.
- Encourage children positively and help them stay focused on the task.
- If a child's behaviour becomes difficult, unsafe or inappropriate, seek help from the teacher rather than attempting to impose your own sanction.
- Different teachers may have different routines and expectations. Check these before you begin.
- Do not search pupils, remove pupils from lessons or use physical intervention unless this forms part of an authorised school procedure being carried out by appropriately trained staff.

8. Professional Boundaries and Physical Contact

Volunteers must maintain clear and professional boundaries with children. Avoid situations that could be misunderstood or that could place either the child or volunteer at risk of an allegation.

- Do not initiate or encourage hugs, cuddles or unnecessary physical contact.
- Use praise, encouragement and calm communication to support children.
- Do not give pupils personal gifts, money or treats unless specifically authorised by the school.
- Do not invite pupils to your home, offer them lifts in a personal vehicle or arrange private childcare or tuition with pupils you meet through school.
- Do not arrange private meetings with pupils or families outside the agreed volunteering role.
- If an unexpected one-to-one situation occurs, move to an open/observable space and inform a member of staff.

9. Reading

Reading is one of the most common volunteering activities. Our aim is to build confidence and a love of reading.

1. Create a comfortable, relatively calm space and give lots of praise and encouragement.
2. If a child is stuck, use the reading strategies modelled by the teacher, such as looking at the first sound/blend, breaking a word into parts, using context and re-reading the sentence.
3. Ask questions about the text to develop understanding, such as what happened and what might happen next.
4. For Key Stage 1 reading diaries, date and sign the diary and note the page number. Keep written comments positive; pass any concerns or teaching suggestions directly to the teacher.

10. Other Activities

You may support activities such as art, design and technology, small-group work, school visits, resource preparation and tidying. The teacher or lead member of staff will explain the safety, behaviour and safeguarding expectations for each activity.

11. School Visits and Off-Site Activities

Before the visit:

- You will receive a briefing about the plan, emergency procedures and your responsibilities.
- Provide your mobile number to the teacher for emergency use only.
- Do not share trip details, photographs or pupil information on social media.
- Follow staff instructions and do not deviate from the agreed itinerary.

During the visit:

- Maintain appropriate visual supervision of your allocated group and follow the trip leader's arrangements for headcounts.
- Do not take a child to the toilet or enter a private space alone with a child; refer the child to a member of staff.
- If a child is unwell, distressed, missing or unsafe, alert a member of staff immediately.

- Do not discipline a child yourself; follow the school's Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy and seek staff support.
- Remain vigilant around roads, water, unfamiliar environments and other hazards.

After the visit:

- Remain with the group until the trip leader confirms that children are safely returned and accounted for.
- Report any concerns or incidents before leaving the site.

12. Online Safety, Personal Devices and Artificial Intelligence

- Do not use personal phones, cameras or recording devices to photograph or record pupils.
- Keep personal devices away while working with children unless their use has been specifically agreed for an authorised purpose.
- Do not communicate with pupils through personal social media, messaging, email or gaming platforms.
- Do not upload pupil information, photographs, school documents or confidential information to personal accounts or online services.
- Do not enter identifiable pupil, family or staff information into ChatGPT or other generative AI tools.
- Do not use generative AI to create content about pupils, staff or incidents unless explicitly authorised by the school.
- Report harmful online content, inappropriate digital behaviour or safeguarding concerns immediately to staff.

13. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

Information sharing is an important part of safeguarding. Volunteers must protect confidential information but must also report information that may be necessary to keep a child safe.

- Do not discuss individual children, families, staff or incidents outside school.
- Do not share information with other parents/carers or community members.
- Do not take copies of school records or confidential information away from school.
- If you believe information may indicate a safeguarding concern, pass it to the DSL or supervising member of staff rather than deciding yourself whether it is significant.

The school will follow current information-sharing and data protection requirements when deciding how information should be recorded and shared.

14. Security and Martyn's Law

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly known as Martyn's Law, creates a framework for improving protective security and preparedness at qualifying premises and events. The school will follow current Home Office guidance and its own security and emergency procedures as the legislation is implemented.

- Always sign in and out and wear the identification provided.
- Do not allow unauthorised persons to follow you through secure doors or gates.
- Report unfamiliar or suspicious persons, items, vehicles or behaviour to a member of staff immediately.
- Do not share details of the school's security arrangements, vulnerabilities, emergency plans or access arrangements outside school.

- Follow staff instructions during lockdown, evacuation or other emergency situations.

Volunteers are not expected to determine the school's legal status or duties under Martyn's Law. The school will provide any specific instructions relevant to the volunteer's role.

15. Raising Concerns / Whistleblowing

If you are worried about a child, an adult's behaviour, or the way a safeguarding concern is being managed, raise it promptly.

5. Speak to the DSL or a Deputy DSL.
6. If the concern is about the DSL, speak to another appropriate safeguarding lead or the Headteacher.
7. If you cannot safely raise a concern through the normal school routes, follow the school's whistleblowing arrangements and seek appropriate external advice.

Volunteers should not be penalised for raising a genuine safeguarding concern in good faith.

16. Volunteer Induction Checklist

Induction / check	Completed	Date / initials
Volunteer application completed	☐	
References received and checked	☐	
Appropriate DBS check completed/confirmed	☐	
Safeguarding information provided	☐	
KCSIE 2026 information provided	☐	
Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy read	☐	
Volunteer Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct read and signed	☐	
Health & Safety procedures explained	☐	
Fire evacuation procedures explained	☐	
Lockdown/security procedures explained	☐	
Allergy Safety Policy / allergy information provided	☐	
Medical/emergency procedures explained	☐	
Online Safety / Acceptable Use expectations explained	☐	
Confidentiality and information-sharing expectations explained	☐	
Professional boundaries and low-level concerns explained	☐	
Martyn's Law / security expectations explained	☐	
Volunteer lanyard / identification issued	☐	

Induction completed by: _____ Date: _____

17. Volunteer Information and Agreement

Please complete the following information as part of the school's safer recruitment and volunteer induction process.

Title: _____ First name: _____ Surname: _____

Date of birth: _____ Previous names (if applicable): _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

Email address (if applicable): _____

Home telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Class teacher / area to assist: _____

Days and times available: _____

_____

Particular talents, interests or relevant experience: _____

_____

Safer Recruitment / DBS Information

The school will determine the appropriate DBS and safeguarding checks for the proposed volunteer role. Where an enhanced DBS check with children's barred list information is required, volunteering cannot begin until the school has confirmed that the required checks have been completed.

If you have information that must be disclosed as part of the school's safer recruitment or DBS process, please discuss this confidentially with the Headteacher or the person managing your application rather than recording sensitive details on this form.

Volunteer Declaration

I confirm that I have read and understood the Trimley St Martin Primary School Volunteer Helpers' Handbook and the Volunteer Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct. I agree to follow the school's safeguarding, confidentiality, health and safety, allergy safety, online safety and professional boundary expectations.

I understand that I must report safeguarding concerns immediately and that the school may withdraw the volunteering arrangement if I do not meet the required standards or if safeguarding checks are not satisfactory.

Volunteer signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Headteacher / authorised school representative: _____ **Date:** _____

Key documents to read alongside this handbook

- Trimley St Martin Primary School Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Trimley St Martin Primary School Volunteer Behaviour Policy and Code of Conduct
- Trimley St Martin Primary School Allergy Safety Policy
- Trimley St Martin Primary School Health & Safety Policy
- Trimley St Martin Primary School Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Trimley St Martin Primary School Online Safety / Acceptable Use arrangements
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 – relevant information provided by the school

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