

Guidelines for parent/carer helpers

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General Protocols

Ethos - As a parent/carer helper your support is invaluable to our children's development. We want you to find it a rewarding experience.....

- For your own protection, never put yourself in a position where you are alone with a child and out of sight of others.
- Please ensure that you sign in & out and wear a "visitor" badge so that we can identify all adults on site.
- We have a policy whereby mobile phones are only used in the staff area. Your phone and any other personal belongings can be looked after in the school office or the cupboard at the end of the staff corridor.

Need for discretion

- For reasons of confidentiality and space we request that you do not use the staff room during playtimes. The Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant will bring you a drink.
- Please help us maintain our ethos and high standards in regard to conduct/language/respect.
- We regret there is inadequate parking on site and so you may find spaces in the Memorial Hall.
- We encourage you to work in classes other than your own child's.
- Please ask for guidance if you are unsure at any time. Sometimes we don't realise that you don't know.
- Please familiarise yourself with the fire drill arrangements of the class you are in - full fire safety information is on page 22.
- If a medical incident occurs please contact the class teacher or teaching assistant for advice.
- Most of our doors allow exit, but not re-entry. As this is a security measure, please ensure doors are closed behind you and the children you are working with.

Please let the school know if you are unable to help for a promised session so the teacher can plan accordingly.

Reading - tips when sharing a book with a child

Overview

Reading is probably the most important skill that children will learn in primary school. It opens up a whole new world of learning and imagination. The more they practice, the easier they will find it to develop this vital skill.

Guidelines for sharing a book with younger children

1. Ask them the title of the book.
2. Can they tell you something about the story - before they begin to read?
3. Ask them to point to each word as they follow the text.
4. Encourage them to work out words for themselves - or even just the beginning sound.
5. Encourage them to use picture clues with their reading.
6. If they finish the book they are reading - play a game. "Find the Word" ask them to find random words in the book, e.g. she, went etc. or go through word cards by making it into a game (ask class teacher for ideas).
7. If a child reads a book easily ask them to tell the story in their own words or to think of a different ending.
8. For children with longer texts - read part of the book and ask them to tell the rest of the story in their own words.
9. Write a constructive comment in the reading diary - e.g. X was able to recognise words at random today, X was able to recognise initial sounds.
10. Some children may only be looking at picture books - so encourage them to talk about what is happening in the pictures.
11. If sharing a familiar story e.g. Goldilocks and the Three Bears, encourage children to join in repeated phrases.

Guidelines for sharing a book with older children

1. Discuss about the book and ask the title.
2. Can they tell you the author or find the name of the author?
3. If they are well into the story can they tell you about the main character(s)?
4. Can they tell you what has happened so far in the story?
5. Can they predict what might happen next?

6. After reading can they answer questions on what has been read?
7. Do they understand the message in the story?
8. Encourage them to work out new words - breaking down into phonemes (sounds).
9. Have a dictionary at hand and encourage them to write down and look up maybe two new words as this will help extend vocabulary.

If they finish book they are reading, ask if they enjoyed it/which bit they most enjoyed. Ask them what was their favourite section? Why? If they did not enjoy it - encourage them to say why?

Spelling

Does good spelling really matter?

It's true that life is easier in the age of word processors and spellcheckers. But, to get the best out of the technology, children still need good spelling skills.

Here are the types of spelling lists children might be working on:

- List of key words. There are about 500 words that children use over and over again. If children learn ten a week, then in a couple of years, they will be able to spell nearly all the words they will need for their writing. The advantage of this system is that the words are really useful. The disadvantage is that many common words are not easy to work out letter by letter. Think of 'what', 'their' and 'through'.
- Words where the patterns made by the letters are all the same (for example 'fruit' and 'suit'). It's easy to learn a list where all the words follow the same pattern, but some of them might not be useful straightaway.
- Words from a topic - for example, if children are learning about space, they might be learning the names of the planets.
- Word families (for example 'write', 'wrote' and 'written') or spelling rules.
- Words that children have mis-spelt in their work.

Helping the child

Look, say, cover, write and check.

Write the word correctly on a piece of paper. Ask the child to look carefully at the word, particularly at the shape of the word, and say it out loud. They should try to get a picture of the word in their mind and look for the root word (for example, the 'hear' in 'heard'). You could time this by counting out five seconds. Then the child should cover the word or fold the paper over and try to remember it. Now they should write the word out afresh. (Does it match the picture in their heads)? Finally, they should uncover the original word and check the spelling.

Encourage them to do this at least two or three times (or more) for each new word, until they are able to remember it.

How To Help Children Learn 'Difficult' Spellings

VISUAL:

1. HIGHLIGHT the part of the word that causes the difficulty. Use huge letters, sparkly felt-tips - anything to make it stand out and be noticed.
2. Spot words within words: sep **A RAT** e.
3. Identify the prefix, root and suffix in a word, so we know that: **dis**appear has one 's' but **diss**satisfy needs two.

AURAL:

1. Say the word as it sounds: *knight*, *comb*, *Wednesday*, *government*.
2. Tapping or clapping syllables (and knowing each syllable has a vowel)

RE-MEM-BER.

3. Learn or invent a MNEMONIC, which works for you: 'Silly Ants in Dresses' (SAID).

DEVELOPMENT KINAESTHETIC TECHNIQUES

1. Cut out letters of the alphabet and let children select them one by one to spell a problem word.
2. SOS - Simultaneous oral spelling - child says letter as it is written.
3. Trace word in sand!
4. Write a word with eyes closed.

Working with a small group

Here are some tips to help you when you are working with a small group of children.

Before the session starts

Find out from the teacher where she wants you to work, who will be in your group, what the children will be doing and how long the session should last.

The teacher will expect you to maintain control of the group

She will let you know of any children in the group who may need a particular approach and give you advice on how to handle them. If you are struggling, ask for help.

The teacher will expect the children to work quietly and sensibly

This will vary slightly according to the age of the children and type of activity you are doing with them. Younger children tend to make more noise simply because they still read aloud and need to talk about the work they are doing. As children mature they can work quietly for increased lengths of time. Children working in pairs need to talk to each other.

All children should be sitting on their chairs when writing so that their work is neat. Children should speak calmly and politely to each other and to you. Don't let them start chatting about things other than the task in hand. If they do, remind them of their work by asking a question or asking a child to read out his work to the group.

The teacher will expect you to follow her teaching plan

The teacher should have written down for you some notes, which will tell you what the children are supposed to have completed by the end of the session.

Introducing the activity to the children

Tell them what they are to do, think about or discuss. Tell them what it is they are expected to achieve by the end of the session. These are some examples.

- 'You should have at least three well thought-out sentences written down.'
- 'You should have finished questions 1 to 15 in this exercise.'
- 'Everyone will have suggested at least one line of this poem we are writing together.'

Make sure that everyone understands the instructions

If a child is unsure, let the others start and you can explain again to the child, and check with them as they begin so that you know they are doing the right thing. Then check the others to see that they have interpreted your instructions correctly.

Support any child who is struggling

Ask the child what is causing them to struggle. It may be that they need some extra piece of equipment, or have forgotten how to use something. Help the child to find the page in the dictionary, remind him how to use a ruler by starting at the zero, or whatever else is causing the problem. This may be all it takes to get them going again. Think about the age of the children you are helping and their ability level. Doing the work for the child is not an option! You are aiming to help them learn how to help themselves by reminding them of routines and how to manage their learning.

Playing games

If you are playing a game with the children, read the instructions beforehand and make sure that all the pieces are there. If the game is new to the children explain it briefly to them before you start.

Make sure that they follow the rules. It is important that children learn to be fair, to take turns and to be losers as well as winners.

You are an important role model for the children, so at all times be aware that children will be copying you.

Taking a group out of the room

If you are taking a group of children out of the classroom you must focus on good behaviour. The teacher will let you know what is expected. You should remind children of the accepted behaviour before you set off and insist on it at all times.

Using computers

Ask the teacher to make it clear which programs the children are going to be working on. If you would like to have time to learn more about these programs speak to the class teacher or ICT co-ordinator.

There will be rules in the school about use of the Internet. If you are using it, remind the children of these rules before they begin and keep watching what they are doing and what websites they are accessing.

Working with younger children

Some important skills, which younger children need to develop are those of speaking and listening.

Many children have not had the opportunity to spend time with an adult who will

- encourage them to express their ideas
- listen to them
- respond to them in a supportive way.

There is a great need for adults who can

- help children to develop a conversation
- help children to find the best word to express what they are trying to say
- encourage reluctant speakers.

Other children need to learn how to listen, to let others have their turn, to be polite when responding and to give value to everyone's contribution. Whenever you work with a group of young children think about these skills and try to use any opportunities to develop them.

After the session

When the children have left the lesson, feed back any information to the teacher about the activity, behaviour or children who found it difficult.

To Sum Up

As you work with groups of children you will discover simple but effective ways of dealing with the exuberance of children. Think about what went well and what you did to make this happen, then you can use this method again. Children respond well when they are shown respect for their effort and their ideas, and when they know that they are valued. Ask the class teacher for ideas and help if you are concerned about anything and also if you are unsure about any school rules and routines.

It is well known that children work better and achieve more when they have the attention of an interested adult. Thank you for being there for the children.

Helping on a school trip

Information for helpers

Here are some guidelines to help you make the most of this experience, for yourself and for the children.

Before the visit

The teacher leading the visit will send you some information about the place/s you will be going to and what she wants the children to learn during their visit.

Taking a group of schoolchildren on a visit is not the same as taking your own children out. There will be some things the children are not allowed to do. The leader of the visit will have assessed the risks involved in particular activities against strict guidelines and decided which things are safe and which are not. Please keep to these rules.

On the day

You will need to think about

1. your own belongings
2. the children's belongings
3. the health and safety of the group of children in your care
4. providing learning opportunities for each of the children in your group.

1. Your own belongings

Wear appropriate clothing and carry spares, if appropriate, wet weather gear. You are representing the school, so please observe any school rules such as no smoking. Wear things which will stand up to the rigours of the day - this can include dealing with simple First Aid or looking after a child who is sick on the bus. Something that is easily recognisable by the children in your group can also be helpful. A watch is essential.

3. Health and safety

The health and safety of the whole group is the responsibility of the teacher, but you must take responsibility in the first instance for the group of children in your care.

Make sure that you know if any children have medical conditions. Find out who is to administer first aid and what you can and can't do yourself. In school there are very firm guidelines about what can be given to or done for children and who is entitled to do it. Keep to these rules or you could be put in a compromising position.

Count the children whenever you enter a new area and again as you leave it. You cannot count them too often!

On the journey, sit near the children in your group. Make sure that seat belts are secure and that the children stay in their seats for the whole of the journey. Make sure that the children's bags are stowed safely, and are not blocking the aisles. Talk to the children about what they can see on the journey. Count your group each time you get on to the coach, and again just before you leave it. Remind children to leave the coach sensibly and to stand at the side of the vehicle and wait for you. They should never cross the road or move in front of or behind the coach without your direct instruction and supervision.

During the visit, ensure that you keep to meeting times and place agreed with the teacher and other adults.

It is your responsibility to maintain discipline among your group. Make sure you know what the rules are and that the children follow them. Alert the teacher immediately if you are having difficulties with the behaviour of any child. Speak to the teacher in advance if your own child is in the class and you have any concerns about which group they are in for the trip.

If you have a concern about risk in an activity raise it with the teacher immediately.

4. Learning opportunities

Visits provide children with exciting, first-hand experiences from which to learn. Encourage children to explore, think and ask questions and to make the most of your undivided attention. Make sure that you have any necessary equipment to carry out the activities, and that you know how to use it.

Draw the children's attention to conservation and the need to preserve our heritage for others to enjoy.

If you are finding answers to a questionnaire, read through all of the questions first with the children. Check that everyone knows what to find out.

If you are working as a group, or dividing up the questions, don't give the answers away too quickly, but point the children in the right direction if they are struggling.

How are you recording the answers - in notes, diagrams, photographs? Let the children decide which one does the job best.

If you are collecting insects, the children will have been told about the correct way to handle them. They should know how to use equipment to do this safely. Make sure that they follow these methods. If you are looking at farm animals, remind the children about hygiene - ie. no touching mouths or eating until hands have been washed and dried. Remind the children that they should be quiet and move slowly and gently around animals so that they don't frighten them. Some children may not like touching insects or being near animals. After a little gentle encouragement, respect their feelings and let them just watch.

If you are looking round a museum or art gallery, make sure that each child can see the exhibits and can read the information provided. Encourage the children to stay, look carefully and find out as much as they can, before moving on to the next exhibit. In a large room of exhibits steer them towards the ones that are most likely to provide them with the learning opportunities the teacher has planned.

To Sum Up

Children learn many things from visits, and not just 'school work.' They learn how to behave in public places, how to speak to a range of adults and how to take some personal responsibility for themselves and their belongings.

We thank you for making this visit possible for these children. Have a wonderful time!

In the car/coach

Overview

It's quite likely that the children will get bored and restless during car/coach journeys. There are lots of games you can play to keep them amused. Many of them have educational value as well. Here are some suggestions.

Number plate games

Numbers in order

Look at the first digit in number plates. Try to find a 1, then a 2, then a 3, and so on up to 9.

Variation: play the same game for the second and third digits.

This helps with observation and gives younger children practise with recognising numbers and with numerical order.

Alphabetical order

Look at the first letter on number plates. Try to find an 'A', then a 'B', then a 'C', and so on. (note: 'Z' does not appear on car number plates and 'Q' only appears on special plates).

This helps with observation and gives younger children practise with recognising letters and with alphabetical order.

Funny phrases

Look at the letters in the number plate of the vehicle in front. Use them as the initial letters of a phrase, making it as silly as possible. For example, 'MFA' could become 'Mummy Fights Alligators'.

This is good fun. It also helps children with letter sounds and encourages them to be creative.

Looking Out

Follow-on words

One person sees something and says its name. The next person tries to find something beginning with the last letter of the previous thing.

For example, if the first person says 'car' the next person might say 'road'. Then the next person looks for something beginning with 'd'.

This helps children with letter sounds.

Car colours

Each person chooses a colour. You then look out for cars of those colours. Set a time limit. The winner is the person whose colour was seen most times.

Variation: choose car makes, vehicle types or sorts of buildings instead of car colours.

This encourages children to be observant.

Pub cricket

You watch out for pub signs with people or animals and get points for the number of legs there are. For example, 'The Red Lion' scores four. 'The Railwayman' scores two, but 'The Brown Trout' scores zero. The first person to call out the pub name gets the points.

Play the game for a set amount of time - say half an hour - and add up the scores to see who has won.

This helps with observation, reading and simple maths.

Stories

Sentences

Someone says a simple sentence. It might be something like 'The dog ran into the park'.

The next person says the sentence with another word added somewhere in it. So it might then become 'The big dog ran into the park'.

Then the next person adds another word. Perhaps 'The big dog ran quickly into the park'.

Each person takes turns to repeat the sentence with an extra word. This carries on until the sentence becomes impossible to remember.

This helps children to develop their memory and their word skills.

Journey stories

This game can be based on imagination, or on people and objects seen on your journey.

The first player starts the story with a beginning sentence. For example, 'One night an old lady got on a train'. The second player adds the next sentence, which may be 'She was carrying a battered, brown suitcase'. The next player continues to add to the story, for example, 'She was heading for Bournemouth to meet an old friend'. Play continues until the story stops being interesting or none of the players can continue it any further.

This game develops listening skills, observational skills and the ability to tell a story for an audience.

Rhyming

I want a rhyme

The first player says
'I want a rhyme
in jolly quick time,
and the word I choose is HID'.

The other players take it in turns to offer words that rhyme with hid. You may get a did, kid, lid ... Players drop out when they cannot think of another rhyming word. The winner is the last person left in. They can suggest the new starting word. It should have a lot of other words that rhyme with it. Why not try mat, pig or sit?

This game encourages your child to listen carefully and to hear rhymes. This is a skill needed for both reading and spelling.

Word games

Animal alphabet

The first player calls out an animal beginning with 'a' and a word that describes it, also beginning with 'a'. The second player repeats this, but with words beginning with 'b' and so on.

For example,
Angry Alligator

Buzzing Bee
Cute Cat

The game ends when a player cannot think of a further pair or words. Letters such as q, x or z may be missed out.

This game practises the alphabet and encourages children to think of lots of describing words.

How many words can you make?

You will need paper and pencil. Ask your child to see how many little words they can make from the letters in a big word. You may change the order of the letters but can only use the letter in each word as often as it appears in the big word. For example, from Constantinople you could make constant, tan, an, tin, in, no, not, nice, pole, pool, staple, plant... The winner is the person with the longest list of correct words.

This game will encourage your child to look closely at the spelling of words. It's a good introduction to games such as Scrabble.

I went to the

In this game a place is suggested, such as the shops. Players take it in turns to say what they bought there but it must be in alphabetical order. For example, 'I went to the shops and bought an apple'. The next player states what they bought. They may say 'I went to the shops and bought a budgie'. This continues through the alphabet.

To make the game easier, players can suggest items without them having to be in alphabetical order. To make the game harder, players can be asked to remember what has been bought before them in the correct alphabetical order. For example, 'I went to the shops and bought an apple, a budgie, a carrot and a dog'. Players are out when they cannot remember what went before.

Other suggestions for starting the sentence include 'I went on a trip and took a', 'I went to the seaside and saw a', or 'I packed my bag and in it I put'. Also, try making up your own sentences, perhaps about where you are going.

If you play the game using the alphabet, your child practises the correct order of the letters. In any version, children need to listen carefully to

the other players. In the harder version, children also need to remember what has been said.

To Sum Up

With a bit of imagination, a long car/coach journey can be a chance to have fun with the children. Don't forget the old favourites, like 'I Spy' and '20 questions'. Try some of these games and the children will be learning without realising it - and the journey will be a far more enjoyable experience for everyone.

Fire Safety Information for all staff.

Be aware of:

- Fire action notices - these detail the exit route and assembly point for each room. Please make sure you are familiar with these for all rooms you work in.
- Alarm bells - you should make sure you know where the alarms are for each area you work in and how you would set it off. Usually the glass just needs a push in the middle as indicated.
- Exits - make sure you know all the options for exits in case one is blocked. Ensure that all exits are kept clear at all times.
- Extinguishers - be aware of the location of these. They should only be used by you if you are absolutely sure there is no danger to yourself or others. (If you are going to use one make sure you know the type of extinguisher it is and what type of fire it can be used for).
- If there are any issues let the Leadership Team know a.s.a.p.
- Children with specific disabilities: there are Personal Evacuation Plans in place and staff working with these children should ensure they are aware of procedures.

Regularly remind the children:

- That if they see a fire they should inform an adult immediately.
- The fire exits and assembly points for the rooms they normally occupy. The assembly points are the junior or infant playground or the early years' outdoor classroom.
- What to do when they reach the assembly point.
- On hearing the alarm they should immediately stop what they are doing and listen to the adult in charge.
- They should line up calmly, quietly and quickly as soon as told to.
- Fire exits must be kept clear and not blocked with their belongings/equipment/furniture.
- If they are not with their class at the time an alarm goes off, then they should quickly leave the building by the nearest exit. If possible they should join their class at the assembly point. If not, then they must go to the nearest assembly point, form a separate line, and ensure an adult knows where they are.

If you see a fire:

- Immediately set off the nearest alarm, (the office staff are responsible for calling emergency services).
- Commence evacuation procedure.
- Do not tackle the fire! (Unless you are absolutely sure there is no danger to yourself or others).

Evacuating the premises:

- On hearing the alarm the children should be quiet and ready to listen.
- The adult in charge should instruct the group to line up at the nearest exit.
- The children should lead out calmly, quietly and quickly, via the route, and to the assembly point specified, for the room being occupied by the group at that time.
- If possible the CT should accompany the class, leaving the TA's to 'sweep' the building as they leave. If there are no TA's in the area you are working, then CT must perform the 'sweep' as they leave with the class.
- As you leave the building, be aware of all children and staff around you and ensure they are leaving too.
- On their exit from the building the CT should conduct a 'sweep' of all rooms in the area where they were teaching at the time and ensure fire doors are closed as they go.
- Everyone should make their way to the appropriate assembly point and line up in class groups. Everyone is responsible for making sure this happens as quickly, calmly and quietly as possible.

Summoning the Emergency Services:

- The Secretary will phone 999 immediately on hearing the alarm. If she is not in school this is the responsibility of the person in charge.
- The Secretary/person in charge will collect the registers box, (containing class registers, visitors books and junior playground gate key), and make their way to the junior playground assembly point.
- Once roll call has been completed the person in charge should open the junior playground gate and send a staff member to stand by the school premises gate on Marden Road, in order to meet the emergency services.

Roll call:

- The children should line up in class groups and wait in silence, there are coloured dots on the Infant playground to help them with this.
- The registers will be given out, usually by the Secretary. The adult in charge of the group must immediately conduct a roll call and report to the person in charge - usually the Headteacher, Deputy Head or School Manager. You must report that all children are present or who is missing.
- Missing children will be located under instruction of the person in charge - usually the Headteacher, Deputy Head or School Manager.
- Everyone must stay in place and await further instruction.
- No-one may re-enter the building without permission of the person in charge - usually the Headteacher, Deputy Head or School Manager.