



Guide for Volunteers

At Thameside we are fortunate to have a strong partnership between the school, parents and other members of the local community. The school and the children benefit enormously from the generosity of volunteers who give their time. I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all volunteers for their commitment to our school.

S Greenaway July 2025

Who can volunteer?

There are many people who volunteer to support children in the classroom at Thameside. Here is an example of some of the volunteers we have had so far:

- Parents
- Grandparents
- Governors
- Older children of members of staff
- Parents and partners of members of staff
- Friends of members of staff
- Older children from local secondary schools on work experience
- Prospective students on pre teacher training observation visits
- Visiting experts

What do volunteers do?

There are many activities that volunteers support. Here are just a few:

- **1:1 reading** - we are very proud of the success of this programme at Thameside. We hold training workshops for volunteers who want to help with reading – ask the office for more information.
- **Reading** to classes of children, perhaps in another language.
- **Oracy or Social Skills** – supporting the development of language by using story sacks or playing games on a 1:1 basis.
- Supporting lessons such as art and design, MFL, design and technology, food technology (**cooking!**) as well as geography, history etc
- Setting up lessons such as **art and design** and supporting children within the lesson
- 1:1 support to develop children’s fine motor skills – this could involve cutting activities or using malleable materials to develop finger and hand strength, or tracing activities which will improve **handwriting**
- Supporting groups in subjects such as **geography, history or design and technology**; this may involve helping with practical work, research or other related activity
- Helping with **library** sessions; helping the younger children to choose books and follow the lending procedure
- Supporting children by talking to them in their own **language**
- **Gardening** sessions
- Extended school activities such as homework club
- Supporting our **scrapstore play** at lunchtimes
- Helping out with the **Food 4 Families** project
- Supporting **drama/productions** – making props, providing costumes
- Supporting **themed days** (eg a Tudor Feast, Viking day)

Does it have to be on a regular basis?

No, we would welcome your support on whatever basis you can provide it!

Some volunteers have spoken to whole classes on occasion about:

- Their jobs – so that children are aware of the world of work and have aspirations
- Cultural or religious events or festivals such as the Chinese New Year, Diwali and Hanukkah

Supporting trips:

- Parents often accompany trips with their child's class; the ratio of adults to children varies across the age range, but Foundation Stage need many parents to support trips
- These can be local trips walking within the Caversham area, visiting the river, nature school, local park, library as well as Waitrose
- Parents have walked to Reading Museum with classes
- Other trips have been further afield - to the Harry Potter Studios, for example
- All our trips and visits have an educational value and support the curriculum in school

How will I know what to do?

The teacher will brief you at the beginning of the session you are supporting. This should include information about the activity you are supporting and the sorts of questions you should ask. It may also include a health and safety briefing especially if you are supporting a trip. It could also include tips on how to manage the children in your group.

If you are in any doubt about what you are doing please ask!

To ensure the safety and well-being of all the children at Thameside, please take a moment to read the following information.

Signing in

Please sign in at the reception desk on arrival stating the time you arrive. You will be supplied with a lanyard which has a fob and badge on it, which you should wear at all times whilst in school. Please remember to sign out on your departure.

Safeguarding

All volunteers who come into school regularly are required to have a DBS check and a List 99 check. They will also be asked to fill in an application form and supply two referees. Volunteers will be asked to work in a public space.

All volunteers have to have **Universal Safeguarding Training** and take the quiz afterwards.

The training and quiz can be located here: <https://sway.office.com/lvqJTty6FU9BQWu9I?ref=Link>

If a child does or tells you something that may be of concern you should tell the teacher in the first instance. You may be asked to talk to the designated child protection officer (Mrs Greenaway).

As part of our safeguarding responsibilities, Thameside Primary School has a legal duty to protect children from the risk of radicalisation and extremism. This is known as the **Prevent Duty**, and it applies to everyone working or volunteering in a school.

Radicalisation means the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect for people of different faiths and beliefs.

If, during your time volunteering, you see or hear anything that concerns you – such as a child expressing extreme views or showing signs of being influenced by extremist ideas – you must report it immediately. Please speak to the class teacher or to Mrs Greenaway, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

The school takes all safeguarding concerns seriously and will always act in line with national guidance.

For further information please see: [Thameside's Safeguarding Policy](#)

Confidentiality

Volunteers are welcome to join staff members at break times for refreshments in the staffroom but should not discuss children.

Volunteers are expected to abide by the school Confidentiality Policy and not discuss staff, children or events experienced in school, outside of school.

For further information please see: [Thameside's Confidentiality Policy](#)

Fire Procedures

In the case of the fire alarm sounding (a continuous ringing) you should stay with the class you are supporting and leave the building by the appropriate exit. Notices in the classroom will tell you where your nearest exit is.

You should walk with the children to the assembly point on the field. Once on the field you should report to the Head teacher (or deputy in her absence).

All policies are available on the [Thameside Primary School Website](#). Alternatively you can obtain a paper copy of any policy from the school office.

Thank you for your help and support.

Thameside.