



Information for Parents

Making a difference

Parent Helper Guidance

St. Mark's Primary School, Hamilton



The whole school community values your contribution to the educational experience as a pupil of St. Mark's.

We appreciate your help in supporting us to enhance the learning of our children.
We know that you find your time with us rewarding and enjoyable.

We aim to :

- provide a welcoming atmosphere and a positive ethos throughout the school, ensuring all children are educated in a safe, secure, happy and health-promoting environment;
- develop the Catholic faith within each child in a caring Christian environment;
- have consistently high expectations and match these with high quality modern resources which are effectively used to support programmes of study;
- raise attainment through self evaluation and continuous improvement in every aspect of the schools work and life;
- develop within all pupils a positive attitude towards their environment contributing to the wider community in a responsible and caring way;
- develop the partnership with parents and carers and ensure that they are kept fully informed and encouraged to be active participants in their children's progress;
- support the development of best professional practices amongst the staff which provide impact and benefit to pupils;
- ensure each child is brought to a deeper understanding of their rights and responsibilities and is helped to appreciate the diversity of other cultures and beliefs;
- provide a rich and balanced curriculum, encouraging creativity and promoting high.

Parent helpers have a valuable role in helping us to fulfil these aims.

Disclosure

You will realise that to keep the children safe we have to take a few precautions. If you would like to volunteer to help with any activities in our school it is a legal requirement that you hold a current Protecting Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Certificate. In order to comply, all volunteers must undergo a criminal background check to ensure their suitability.

To apply for this collect a form from the school office – there is no cost to you. Be assured that all information will be treated in the strictest confidence and that these checks are done only in the best interests and safety of the children.

Parent Helper Guidelines

In St. Mark's we encourage the children to call you by your title and surname, e.g. Mrs. Smith, rather than by your first name - even if they know you really well!

Making a difference

Tea/coffee arrangements

There are tea and coffee making facilities in the Visiting Services Room.
The toilets are opposite the Staffroom.

Confidentiality

It is vital that all staff, parents, and other adults working in the school work to a policy of confidentiality.

Any information concerning children, whatever it may be, must be kept confidential.

If a parent helper is approached by a parent and asked for information it is essential that she/he refer that parent to the class teacher or member of the management team. The teachers here have the responsibility of informing parents of any concerns about a child.

Volunteers working in classrooms should do so on the understanding that they support the teaching staff and will not pass opinion on such matters as discipline or teaching styles outside the school.

Parents are usually asked to help in classes away from their own child.
Please encourage the children to be independent - we expect children to try everything themselves before we help them.

Please do not lift, carry or move a child in any way.

If a child does or tells you something that causes you concern, please tell the class teacher or Head Teacher as soon as possible after the disclosure, in an appropriate setting, so that others cannot overhear.

Organising your time

We know that some parents can only come in on particular mornings/afternoons on an occasional basis or on alternate weeks. Your help will still be very much appreciated so please talk to us about what you can manage and we will plan accordingly. Please let the school office know, as soon as possible, if you are unable to come in on an agreed day as our staff plan for you.

Ways in which you can help

There are many ways you can help, such as –

- Help children's reading by practising with them
- Supporting children in activities given by the class teacher
- Supporting the work of the school office.
- Developing resources for pupil use
- Helping in the shared areas e.g. Library / I.C.T. Suite
- Assisting on educational programmes e.g. Primary 7 swimming

Making a difference

Have a particular skill to offer?

We are always looking to expand the experiences of our children both in and out of school. If you have a particular skill or interest which would contribute to the school, e.g. Scottish Country Dancing, Gardening, please let us know.

Safety in the school environment

When you arrive please come into school through the front door, sign in at the school office and collect your visitor's badge. Don't forget to sign out and return your badge when you leave.

Guidance for volunteers for school trips

Parents support the care and welfare of the children, including supporting them with toilet arrangements, behaviour appropriate for the event, using money, and taking care of their own belongings. Parents routinely do not have their own child in their group. The teacher will give parent helpers a list of children for whom they are responsible. If the trip involves a coach journey, please help the children in your group fit their seatbelts. Children are not allowed to eat or drink on the coaches. The class teacher has a First Aid box and medication and is responsible for all first aid and medication. The class teacher sets the rules, routines and expectations for the day. Please help the teacher by ensuring your group follows all instructions. If there is a medical or other emergency, let the class teacher know immediately. The class teacher is responsible for contacting the school and parents in emergency situations. If you need to leave your group for any reason, e.g. to take a child to the toilet, please inform the class teacher. If you have any queries or problems concerning the trip, please direct these in the first instance to the class teacher, or if you would rather, the Head Teacher .

Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association (P.T.A.)

St. Mark's is justifiably proud of its Parent Council and Parent Teacher Association. Meetings are on the first Thursday of every month. If you are interested in offering help in this way, please let us know.

This leaflet is one of a series written by the school to highlight the real difference parents can and do make to their children's learning.

The Staff of St. Mark's Primary School highly value working in partnership with parents and carers to the benefit of our children.

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